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ABSTRACT

Written for teachers of gifted and talented students, the handbook provides an overview of gifted education and curriculum development. The first chapter considers the need for preparation of teachers who work with the gifted. A summary of past and present efforts in gifted education reviews research on teacher education and teaching approaches with gifted students. A chapter on preparation for curriculum planning presents examples of attitude scales and data collection forms, (including interest inventories) as well as case studies of gifted children. A final chapter focuses on such curriculum development aspects as group discussion suggestions and ideas for meaningful learning. Examples of student poetry and term reports are included. (CL)

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A Guide Toward

Better Teaching for the Gifted

ED175178

by

Ruth A. Martinson

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Therefore, federal programs must be operated in compliance with this law.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

With a background as classroom teacher, elementary and junior high levels, and as school psychologist, Ruth A. Martinson spent the major part of her career as professor of education and psychology at Long Beach (California) State, and in planning and developing teacher education and graduate programs at California State College, Dominguez Hills. Now retired, she has also taught at UCLA, University of Washington, and University of California at Berkeley.

The author directed the California State Study of Programs for the Gifted, 1957-60 which included a rural component. She has written studies on creativity in the gifted with May Seagoe at UCLA, the disadvantaged for the California State Department of Education, and the improvement of teaching for the gifted for the U. S. Office of Education with Jean Wiener.

A past president of The Association for the Gifted, Martinson was sponsor of California Association for the Gifted, member of the Executive Committee of the Council for Exceptional Children, and on the recent State Blue Ribbon Committee on the Gifted (California). She is the author of two books, eight monographs, and numerous articles in ***Exceptional Children***, the ***National Elementary Principal*** and other journals.

As a consultant, she has advised many school systems in California, state units in Florida, Minnesota, Arizona, Washington, Louisiana, and American schools in Japan for three years.

She is the recipient of the Citation of Merit from USOE and distinguished service awards from The Association for the Gifted and from the California Association for the Gifted. She wrote major sections of the 1972 Commissioner's Report to Congress on the Gifted and Talented.

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is written primarily for teachers who are interested in improving their effectiveness with their gifted pupils. The material can also be used by consultants or administrators who wish to carry out inservice work with teachers.

The handbook is written so the contents can be put into practice in a number of ways. Teachers or others can work either individually or in small groups of varying size. They can use all or part of the material, depending on the resources they have available. If necessary, forms can be adapted or changed for local use. None of the material is copyrighted, with one exception which is clearly indicated. It is desirable that the handbook be read through initially, to understand the total scope. It is brief. The contents should also be studied and analyzed carefully with reference to one's own teaching, and as many of the materials as possible be used.

If this is done, it is reasonable to expect the teacher to increase greatly his or her satisfaction in working with the gifted, burdens will be minimized, and the teacher will improve significantly in teaching skills. At least, that has been the experience of a group of superb elementary and secondary teachers who experienced the total process described in this handbook.

Ruth A. Martinson

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This handbook is based on learning gleaned from many years of inservice work with administrators and teachers during summer session workshops, in special courses, and in various school systems. Many of the materials presented throughout were used and developed in these situations. Much of the basic process described has been similarly developed, tried, and refined. All of the persons who evaluated materials and contributed to my education deserve thanks. Productions of others are acknowledged on the forms they developed.

A great deal of credit also must go to Jean Wiener, who joined the project described in Chapters Three and Four as co-director to participate in the development of certain materials, to arrange field activities, and to do the needed statistical analysis. Some assistance on the latter was provided by Stephen Brown and Quentin Stodola.

Besides learning from the inservice work with previous teachers and with the project, the writer gained much from the 187 teachers who participated in the three-year California State Study with which she was privileged to serve as director. This study involved teachers from all grade levels in widely disparate school systems throughout the state. All of these took part in preparatory inservice work in summer workshops and in continuing inservice groups. They communicated freely and openly, both verbally and in writing, with their area consultants and with the writer about their pupils and about the problems and assets of the varied programs within which they taught.

I hesitated to use the names of teachers whose products appear in the text, because it would have been possible to include many more equally as good if space permitted, and because credit is not given pupils by name. I decided, however, to list names in the text itself with their detailed descriptions, in some cases. Others are here: Jacque Steffen, Sunga Greisman, Gloria Woehler, Elroy Lang, Mary Ann Simon, Margaret Nicholson, and Hunter Watson. A number of equally able men and women are not listed because very sketchy reference is made to their contributions in the series of examples. My thanks to all.

Thanks are also due to Irving Sato, Director of the National/State Leadership Training Institute on the Gifted and the Talented, and to David Jackson, Executive Director, for making the publication possible.

Finally, special thanks go to Jeanne Delp for taking time from her busy schedule to read and react to the manuscript.

CHAPTER I. THE NEED FOR PREPARATION OF TEACHERS WHO WORK WITH THE GIFTED* AND TALENTED

A Basic Statement

Increasingly, we are coming to realize that those who work with the gifted must have some special preparation for their responsibility. This is more readily apparent for those with extraordinary and visible talents than it is for those with extraordinary, though invisible minds. Yet the mind, as well as the rest of the person, is inextricably involved in the manifestation of truly outstanding talent and the development thereof. The mind is basic not only to talent development but also to meaningful growth for the individual. Full use of any advanced skills and abilities possessed by the student is essential to satisfying personal development, to advanced learning, application, and significant new discoveries. Full and satisfying development of abilities is also necessary to constructive human relationships, and even for interest in school.

Education in a truly democratic sense is the education of each person to the optimum level consistent with his or her potential. The potential varies markedly in any given school group, as any educator will agree. The proper goal of education should not be limited to bringing groups "up to the norm," but should be a meaningful and interesting learning opportunity for every child, ***including the gifted***. The difficulties of crowded classes, which are commonly cited and which do create problems for thousands of teachers, need not be a deterrent if teachers are aware of the possibilities and resources at their disposal.

School administrators are becoming more and more aware of the many individual differences that exist among teachers as well as among pupils, and are realizing that the practice of passing the gifted around from one teacher to another each year in the name of "democracy" or on the contention that every teacher in a given school is qualified to teach the gifted is ***neither democratic nor valid***. Most people recognize that teachers of the handicapped require highly specialized preparation and proper qualifications for their tasks. Teachers of the gifted who have opportunities for special preparation also are better equipped to provide for their students.

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*Henceforth the term "gifted" will be used throughout this handbook in the generic sense to designate the population with highly advanced, diverse, and complex abilities, for ease of expression. This usage has always been the understanding of the author.

They are aware of and use relevant alternatives to readiness materials when the child is already reading easily and performing basic arithmetic operations, for example.

Two situations within the very recent experience of the author involve a beginning first-grade boy who is currently finishing a third grade mathematics book at home and describes it as "cinchy," while working on grade-level material at school; and a beginning kindergarten girl, who just barely five years of age, is being limited in reading. The latter completes pages of dittoed forms which use analogy items to test knowledge of beginning letters; at home she is reading currently the Laura Ingalls Wilder series and many other books which she selects from the community library. Both state that they are doing the work because the "teacher wants them to," and young children indeed do try to please the teacher. Better alternatives can be worked out easily by the knowledgeable teacher, as later materials will show. Neither of the children cited above has these alternatives presently available at school. The parents are justifiably concerned, but also are hesitant to approach the school for fear of being "pushy."

The Need

The teacher and the teacher's qualifications and preparation are the key to success of any program for the gifted. Administrative arrangements, materials, and other resources are largely meaningless for the ill-prepared or disinterested teacher. Teacher qualifications are the primary factor in good programs and materials or mechanics should follow. Well-qualified teachers can find many ways of using any environment and resources for the benefit of the pupils and their particular interests and needs. These teachers know, too, that many resources published for the gifted are in fact alien to their special needs and ways of learning. Equally important, they are well prepared to evaluate such resources.

What are the traits which identify the potentially successful teacher of the gifted?

In the view of the writer, the successful teacher is one who has wide-ranging interests and the intellectual curiosity so often characteristic of a person who enjoys learning. He or she has been impelled by special interests to move into a field of study or creative endeavor in depth, and understands the force which so often impels the gifted child of any age to do the same. It almost goes without saying that the teacher also is of high intelligence, though he or she may be neither as bright or as knowledgeable about certain fields as the pupil—no matter what the school age. The teacher not only accepts the fact, but takes pride in the accomplishments of the student and marshals any needed outside resources which can provide for the student's needs.

Basic to working with the gifted is thorough knowledge of their characteristics, special needs, and of proper ways to work

with them. Special study not only opens to the teacher opportunities to work with other teachers with similar interests and to become aware of possibilities, but also to increase awareness of special needs and problems. For example, the teacher may become more alert to gifted students who see themselves as "only average," or below average, and operates accordingly, or those who "can't" read or do the math, or who consistently draw below-average grades because they are "no good in school." The teacher who learns of the basis for such problems also learns how to help students recognize their own potentialities. The teacher may give the students special help through spaced tutorial contacts (or use a qualified resource person to do so) which are commensurate with the needs and potential of the pupil. The teacher may simply challenge the student with appropriate material for the first time in his or her school experience.

Awareness of the complexities of giftedness leads to highly diversified classroom activities and modes of operation which differ from the conventional. Varied activities, varied choices and materials, encouragement of pupil planning, initiative, and originality are hallmarks of the classroom in which each gifted pupil is recognized as an individual. Use of special interests and talents is provided for and encouraged. The teacher is an advocate, a resource, an older peer, a challenger, and an ally in the learning process.

The impact on the school and community of this teacher's effort can be great. In the school, the practices of the teacher carry many implications for individualization in all classrooms. The differences lie in the levels of concepts, ideas, talents, pace, mode of operation, relationships of teacher to student, and the types and levels of materials used. Informal descriptions to ***other*** teachers of student planning, their discussion processes, and of media and individually-tailored materials developed by them will suggest ideas for any classroom.

The practice of utilizing adult assistance and resources also may be adapted in many ways for direct contributions to the learning of all children, though the duration of contact is generally reduced, except for remedial purposes or for augmentation of the curriculum. For gifted children, the adult specialist may teach a student or small group of students in a given field of mutual concern and may go on in depth for an unlimited period of time. The specialist, in turn, may bring in other specialists to contribute in areas where they have more knowledge than he or she has.

In similar fashion, cross-age networks of students with similar interests produce outstanding products of all kinds, many of which have no discernable relation to the established curriculum, although the high level of learning and accomplishment is apparent.

All of these outside-of-class resources, used by the insightful and well-prepared teacher, are just some of the ways in which outside resources are brought in to enrich the learning of the gifted

person. In turn, the "outsiders," many of whom launch their relationship with the gifted while skeptics and critics of education in general, become in many cases the most articulate community supporters of the school.

Summary

Recognition that the well-qualified and well-prepared teacher is the key element in the success of any type of administrative arrangement is increasing. Gifted pupils deserve the opportunity to learn under the guidance of knowledgeable adults as much as do other children with special learning needs. The teacher who is aware of giftedness and its meaning and who knows of or can create meaningful opportunities for the gifted can use any environment and make multiple adaptations of many kinds within and outside of the classroom.

CHAPTER II: PAST AND PRESENT EFFORTS IN GIFTED EDUCATION

Brief Summary of Chapter Two for Busy Teachers

Those who wish to read on, to check sources for summary assertions, or to learn of origin of the studies themselves, are urged to read the entire section beginning on the next page. It isn't long!

What are the researchers saying? In capsule form, these are some of their statements:

1. *Extend the classroom to any person or any locale where the special needs of the gifted can be served.*
2. *Recognize and serve the pupil's talents and interests, however alien to the curriculum.*
3. *Tailor the curriculum to the widely differing needs of the gifted.*
4. *Matching of child and adult interests and abilities in the school, if choice is available, is inferred.*
5. *Discussion groups, whether on academic, personal or interpersonal matters, improve the psychological adjustment and academic performance of underachievers. Human beings do not come in separate segments.*
6. *Various special lessons and special media can improve pupil thinking processes, motivation, openness, and social concern.*
7. *The purpose of rewards and the results are intertwined. Teacher-rewards influence young children; peer reactions influence older children more.*
8. *Studies of demonstration centers show that purpose and results are related, and that results are generally positive.*

In sum: teachers do need preparation and guidance to improve their performance. Both teachers and pupils will profit.

And to the teachers: do not be discouraged by any local lack of consultant help. Any teacher, however isolated, can improve his or her effectiveness with the gifted, as the rest of this publication will show.

Extension of Views Expressed

In many ways the views and findings presented in this chapter center on the importance of the personal attributes and knowledge of teachers. The teachers enjoy the gifted and are unthreatened

by them. They know how to work with them to unleash their potential, and they assume the proper role in their own relationships with the gifted.

What does this mean? It means that the teachers are not compelled by their own needs to dominate others, or are necessarily efficient and thorough pre-planners and organizers. The chairperson of a department, for example, may be intelligent, as well as extremely effective in the role of organizer, proud of a clean desk, and entirely unsuitable as a teacher of gifted persons.

Effective teachers need to operate in a climate which encourages ***pupil*** thought and communication, tolerates exploration and risk-taking, without schedules being of paramount importance. Pupils should deal with topics of concern ***to them***, and controversy to stimulate thought and different views should be encouraged whenever appropriate.

Young gifted people of any age tend to be highly verbal, and verbal communication is at the heart of learning within any field that one can conceive. The challenge to the teacher is to guide the sometimes intense verbal communication by use of well-chosen, incisive questions which generate thorough study of issues and eventual productivity. When a teacher does not know a field sufficently well to guide or suggest resources, the task is one of referral and arrangements for students within the school day to use libraries, experts, or teachers where the needed information can be forthcoming.

Pupils themselves can do a great deal to further their own learning if they have the opportunity; an open, flexible system permits this. They have, for example, many times demonstrated great creativity in the use of film and various media to present their conclusions on ways to resolve issues or to produce a creative work.

Individual talents and interests should be of prime concern in the planning of school experiences. Often talents are of long duration and lead to significant adult contributions. The interests of the gifted, though they may differ markedly from those of their peers or from the curriculum frequently are bases for highly advanced learning in depth. While they usually change as a child grows older, the accompanying academic learnings are often much greater and more diverse than a pre-planned advanced curriculum would allow.

Selected Related Studies: Findings of Value

The sampling of early general studies below is confined to those which have particular relevance to the gifted. Many others, including the massive study for the American Council on Education, [21] should be in a complete discussion of general studies, but that is not the purpose here. It is, rather, to present only some which have direct implications for working with the gifted, in the author's judgment.

Extensive research on teacher effectiveness and teacher behaviors has been a product largely of the last two decades, aside from the pioneer researches of such persons as H. H. Anderson and Lippitt. Through the increasing use of scales and application of sophisticated research methods, certain patterns of effective teaching behavior are becoming evident. In a number of studies, effective teachers are found to be those who permit and encourage pupil productivity, who facilitate pupil-initiated activity, who employ positive methods of working with others, and who produce security in their own pupils as a function of their own emotional well being. Acceptance of others and the use of praise and encouragement appear to be important elements. A number of studies have cited the importance of widely ranging interests and high intelligence as factors identifiable in successful teachers. The latter factors appear to be particularly important in teachers of the gifted.

Among the earlier studies was one done by Knoell who found that educational fluency, defined as the ability to call up many ideas, bore a significant relationship to teacher effectiveness, as externally rated. Teaching interns who were rated as effective, planned open-ended lessons. They spontaneously provided alternative ways to communicate and were able to plan for the unexpected. Their cognitive processes appeared fluid and unrestrained. The successful intern was responsive to class needs and difficulties and used a variety of methods, employing flexibility in the implementation of plans and utilizing inquiry for effective teaching. (14)

Flanders found in a significant study that teachers of high-achieving classes accepted, clarified, and used pupil ideas significantly more, criticized less, and encouraged significantly more pupil-initiated talk. (7)

The works of Flanders(7), Smith(24), Bellack(1), and the more recent work of Taba(27,28) have dealt with teaching styles, interaction, and teaching strategies. The latter study analyzed teacher behavior and the quality of student responses with reference to cognitive processes. The relationship of cognitive process to social studies content achievement, to pupil intelligence, to economic status, and to reading and language ability was examined.

An analysis of classroom tapes by trained observers provided evidence that teachers who were trained to develop skills in concept formation, generalization, and application of principles produced like skills to a great extent in their pupils. In general, the pupils of specially trained teachers produced more thought units, more complex thought units, and more sophisticated content than the pupils of teachers with no special training. Not all teachers who were specially trained modified their behaviors to a like extent.

Research on Teaching the Gifted

If one accepts the premise that teachers of the gifted should be fully prepared for their assignment, then one may well inquire as to the pre-service and inservice programs which have been available.

Although the past has produced more talk than action, some work was carried on, primarily because of the convictions of school personnel. The ratio of pupils served by the programs to actual numbers was not great.

The literature on the gifted is comparatively replete with studies which deal with students, their traits, problems in learning, and the like; literature on teachers tends to be exhortation rather than research. Some of each is valuable, of course, but materials presented here will be limited to those based on some type of evidence other than experts' personal experience or opinion. Some studies may have been omitted, but an attempt has been made to cite published materials which are findings useful in teaching and are primarily from an organized study.

The antecedents to present-day research on teaching of the gifted are found in the pronouncements of noted psychologists and educators who worked principally during the decades from the 1930's to the 1950's. These individuals, principally Terman[29], Hollingworth[13], Strang[26], Witty[33], and Wilson[32], stressed the importance of latitude in learning for pupils, the use of specialists as resource personnel, encouragement to the gifted in their learning experiences, recognition of talents, recognition of the need for varying interests and activities, and a differentiated curriculum taught by a highly intelligent teacher.

Their highly pertinent observations were based upon long-time involvement with gifted students and their parents, on longitudinal studies, on records from clinic work, or from surveys.

The research dealing with effective teaching procedures for the gifted is limited in quantity. One of the few surveys is that of Shertzer[23] who pointed out that pre-service teacher education programs throughout the country are largely barren of specific provisions for preparing teachers to work efficiently with the gifted. He noted that in 1958 many institutions provided courses, but only Pennsylvania State University and Hunter College offered a sequence of courses devoted to teacher preparation in this area, and these were in part at the graduate level.

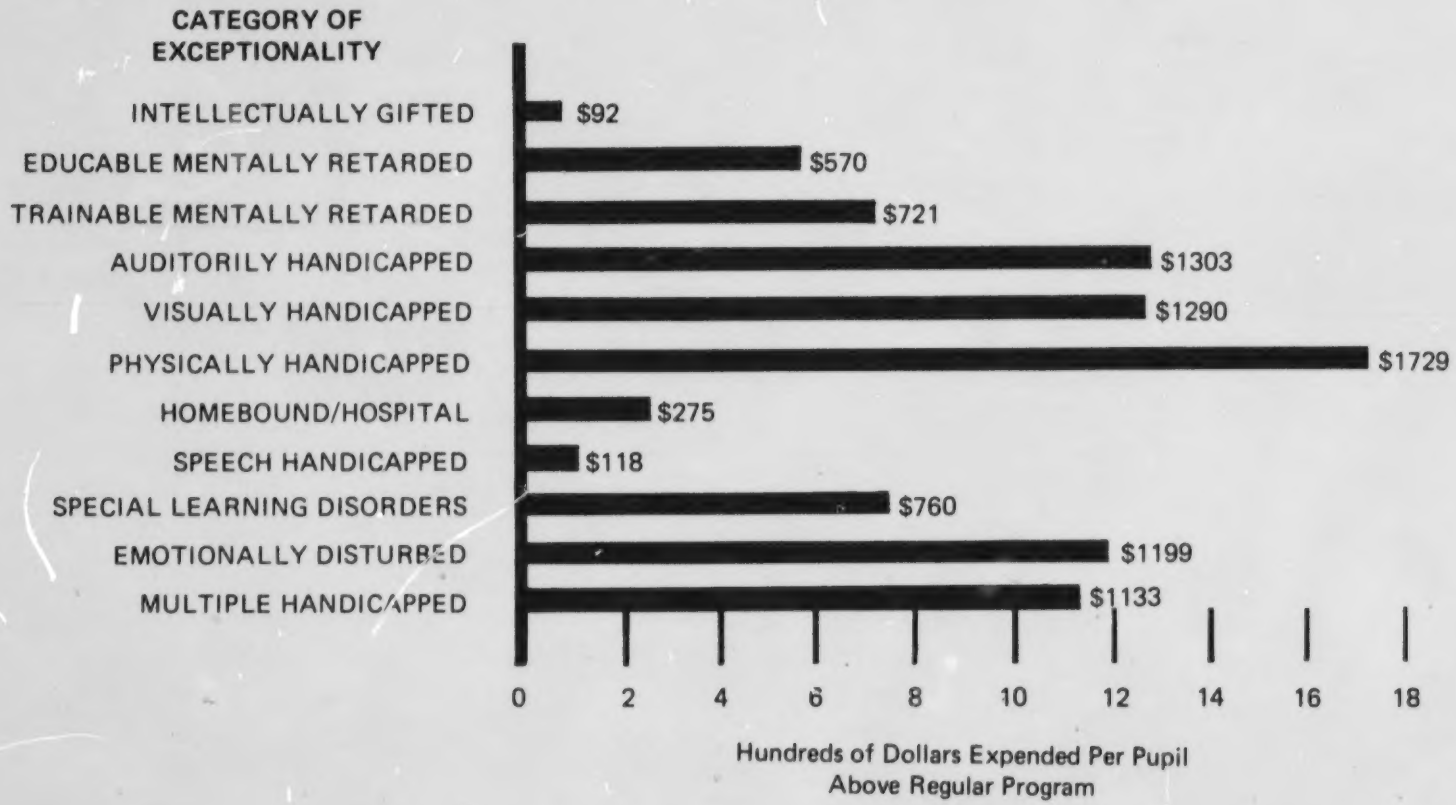
One of the impediments has been lack of funding for gifted programs as compared to those of other children with special learning needs. Figure I shows that even in model schools systems, little funding is likely for the gifted, in contrast to those in other categories. (See Figure 1 next page.)

In the Commissioner of Education's 1972 Report to Congress on the status of the gifted and talented, 28 states indicated some pre-service preparation of teachers, but that preparation may have been limited to a single course or two. The existence of total preparatory courses at even the fifth-year level was rare

Most of the inservice programs also were conducted in these states, with 24 so indicating. That the comprehensiveness of these and the extent of their impact is limited is suggested by the finding in the same report that only ten of the states had any personnel

Figure 1

EXPENDITURES IN 27 MODEL DISTRICTS IN 5 STATES* WITH SUPERIOR PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH EXCEPTIONAL LEARNING NEEDS: EXCESS BEYOND REGULAR PROGRAM



*[CALIFORNIA, FLORIDA, NEW YORK, TEXAS, AND WISCONSIN]

Source: Educational Programs for Exceptional Children: Resource Configurations And Costs, 1970.

assigned at the state level with even partial responsibility for the gifted. The typical consultant was part-time in several areas of responsibility, as was clear from the companion finding that only three states had full personnel with specific responsibilities for only the gifted.

One section of the report dealt with the opinions of 204 experts nationwide who responded to a lengthy questionnaire on the status of the gifted. A section on teacher preparation revealed that only 12 of the experts (6 percent) felt that the teachers in their particular state were prepared for teaching this population. Within their own particular communities, 84 percent confirmed the previous finding by stating that programs were rare, few, or non-existent, while only 4.5 percent stated that programs were mostly adequate or complete. The fewest programs existed at kindergarten and primary levels (1.5 percent), and the most at secondary level (12.5 percent). It is doubtful that many of the school systems which had few or unknown programs, the third category, carried on inservice programs of any substance! (See Figure 2 next page.)

One important result of the Commissioner's Report was government allocation of funds and the founding of a bureau for the gifted and talented in the U. S. Office of Education. Through the bureau, funds in turn have been allocated to the National/State Leadership Training Institute on the Gifted and the Talented. The N/S-LTI-G/T has conducted training programs for leaders who work in most of the states, and has sponsored workshops with colleges and universities. It also has worked closely with various educational units which prepare consultants, parents, and teachers for their respective roles with the gifted. The agency also has been instrumental in the increase of inservice opportunities for those who teach in programs of all types, in sparsely populated as well as in densly populated areas. The area institutes also have been influential in the increase of state consultant personnel, although the total is still far short of a desirable level.

In addition to funding the N/S-LTI-G/T, the office of the Gifted and Talented has communicated to school systems information of value in teacher education, has provided some consultant help, and has compiled information on existing federal funding possibilities useful to states and school systems of all sizes and population density. It must be pointed out, also, that some school systems have carried on inservice programs of substance without any help from either state or federal resources, and some have done this for many years. The same statement can be applied to parent groups and to certain colleges and universities. These efforts, which are increasing rapidly, often can be ascribed to the work of a single person or a small group of persons.* This is not to diminish the

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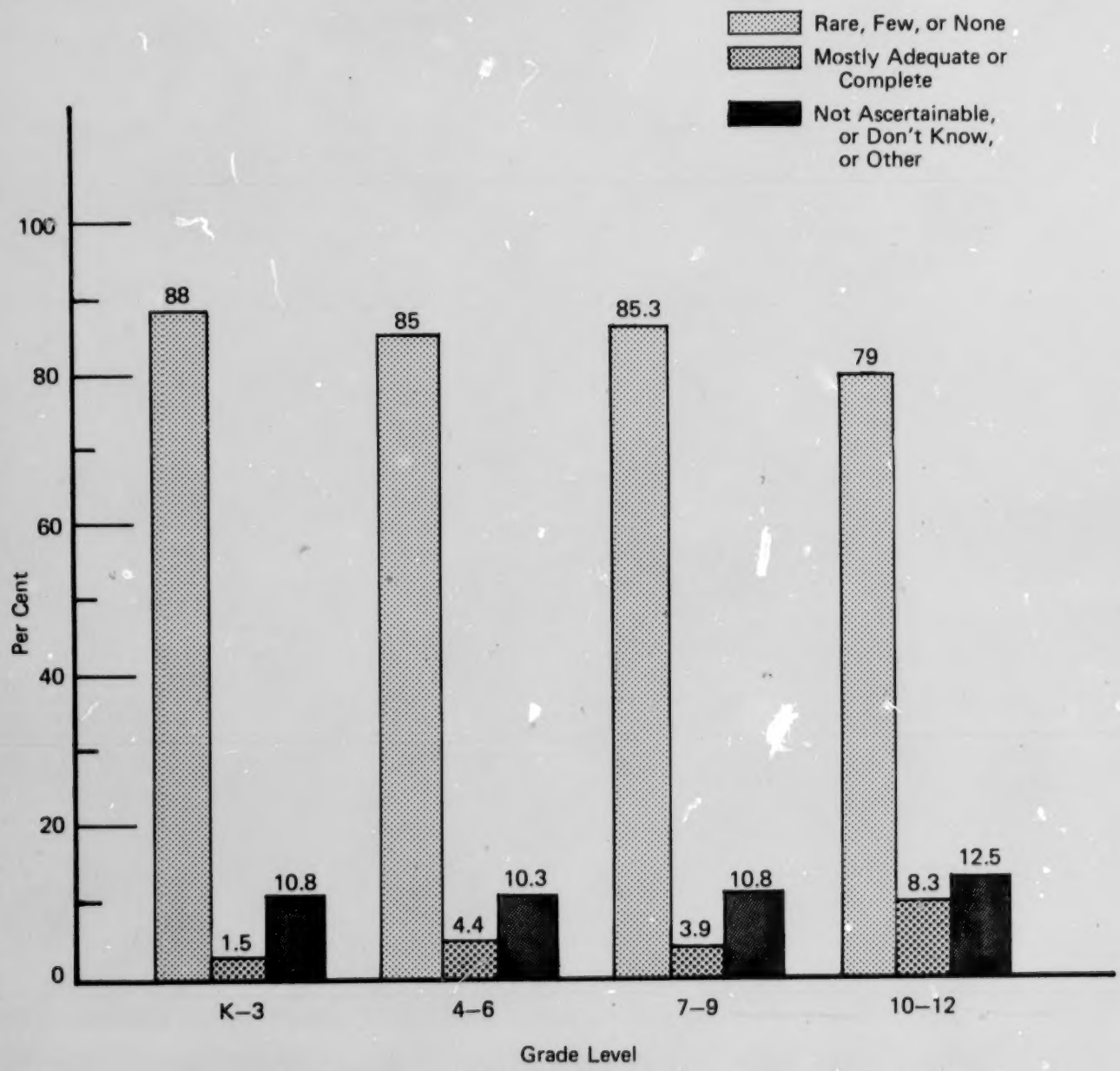
*Just two examples are the Governor's School of Louisiana, the first such school in the nation, founded by George Middleton of McNeese State College, and the large summer workshops of the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools' Office, developed through the work of Gertrude Wood. Both have been followed by later similar efforts in many states. Parent groups and universities also have sponsored inservice activities of many kinds throughout the years.

Figure 2

EXISTENCE OF PROGRAMS AS VIEWED BY EXPERTS



Source: A Survey of Leadership in Education of Gifted and Talented Children & Youth, 1971.

impact of the federal effort, but to give credit to largely unpublicized efforts.

Several studies have been pertinent to the teaching of the gifted during the preceding decade. One is a significant study of successful teachers of the gifted by Bishop[2], in which data were obtained from three groups of teachers throughout the state of Georgia. One group included 109 teachers who were selected by one or more gifted students as the "most successful" high school teacher. The students who nominated the teachers were high school seniors who had participated in the governor's Honors Program of 1964. Another group included teachers who had taught these persons but who were not nominated. The third group included thirty of the identified teachers who were selected as a stratified random sample for intensive study. Instruments used included the Teacher Characteristic Schedule of Ryans, questionnaires completed by the students, personal interviews of teachers, the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (Verbal), the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule, and college transcripts. The identified teachers were found to be persons of high ability (mean WAIS IQ 128) and high achievers (mean grade point average 3.0 to 3.5 on a 4.0 system).

Bishop found further that teachers who are identified as successful by intellectually gifted, high-achieving high school students tend to be mature, experienced teachers. They pursue literary and cultural interests, are student-centered in their teaching approach, possess favorable opinions of students, are characterized by systematic and businesslike classroom behavior, are stimulating and imaginative in their classroom behavior, are well informed and enthusiastic about their subject matter, encourage students to engage in independent study and thought, prefer to teach gifted students, and favor special educational provisions for gifted students.

A study which involved six gifted seventh grade students and six controls suggests that teacher emphasis on inquiry training produces improved teacher questioning and teacher response[34]. Another found that when teachers of second grade gifted classes increased the use of pupil ideas, interaction increased. No change was found without this emphasis by teachers.[6]

Another, published by the Toronto Board of Education, confirmed findings of earlier studies that underachievers improved in psychological adjustment and in academic adjustment, whether the discussion groups which were conducted stressed personal problems, group feelings, or academic matters.[19]

Teachers need preparation for the conduct of individual study by gifted high school students[15]. Otherswise some success in academic areas occurs, but growth in creative thinking and conceptual understanding does not. It is the present writer's observation that individual study is difficult for those high school teachers who are concerned about requirements; understanding of

the implications of the very term "independent study" is much more difficult for them. This is not to say that teachers should not be actively involved in helping the student to plan a study, or to assist as needed. It does mean that it is necessary to reduce the traditional push for papers and other "proof" of productivity. productivity.

One of the few efforts in teacher improvement for the gifted has been carried on in Illinois as part of the Talent Development Project. Teachers participated in summer and academic year institutes in which they assessed classroom interaction and analyzed classroom discussion and the level of classroom examinations. These studies, reported by Rogge and others[20] produced desirable changes in extent of communications, level of communication, quality of examination items, and rated teacher performance. Teacher participants learned to reduce the amount of their own talking and to reduce as well the amount of memory-cognition content within the classroom.

Several studies have utilized models such as that of Guilford in the analysis of verbal interaction. One such study by Gallagher[8] (1965) assessed the verbal interaction of academically talented students in ten junior and senior high school classes in English, science, and social studies. Gallagher's study indicated that cognitive-memory production and convergent thinking production were the most prevalent, and that very few interactions involved divergent or evaluative thinking. The type of student response seemed to be tied to the style of teacher questioning.

While the study was one of evaluation rather than intervention, Gallagher, Aschner, and Jenne[9] later identified a problem common in many classrooms—that of questioning at a cognitive-memory (and thus less meaningful for gifted) level. Even when teaching identical concepts, teachers were found to differ greatly both in type of question and mode of questioning, through application of a classification system developed by Aschner.

Several studies on changes in learning emphases or improvement in learning based on various practices and media have produced positive changes. Hauck[12] used the Guilford tests of evaluative thinking with a group of gifted sixth grade students after one month of special lessons designed to improve thinking processes. She found that evaluative abilities showed significant improvement after the experience, and that ability in problem solving continued.

A film series on the life-styles and values of adults who are concerned about societal problems and needs and an accompanying anthology was developed by Drews[4] for showing to a large number of talented ninth grade students. A series of before-after measures showed greater motivation to learn, more openness, and more social concern than before

Rewards affect creative production under certain conditions, according to Torrance[30]. Rewards for interesting and original work or for correctness result in improvement in those lines. Torrance found that the impact of teacher reward is more productive with young children than with older. However, peer reaction influences older children more.

The 70's

Studies in the 70's have been infrequent. Most of the efforts have been of an inservice nature. Several continuing projects have a related evaluation component. Typical are those in Illinois and at the University of Connecticut, described briefly below.

J. M. Steele and his colleagues found in their Illinois projects that demonstration centers with highly prepared teachers have produced favorable reactions from visitors, and that a higher level of thinking, questioning, application, improved relationships, and greater independence in pupils are the result. A series of studies has continued in conjunction with the centers[25].

A 1974 effort conducted in Connecticut through the co-sponsorship of a variety of schools has implications for teaching the gifted disadvantaged[10]. Although an appreciable number of fellows in the federally subsidized program are working on advanced degrees, about two-thirds are either training teachers or inner-city teachers. Annual evaluations indicated that the participants respond favorably to the program and have an increased sensitivity to the gifted disadvantaged and their needs as well as greater success in their own work.

CHAPTER III: PREPARATION FOR CURRICULUM PLANNING

Rationale

The rationale behind the entire process of planning suitable educational experiences reflects a belief which the writer has held for many years. It is simple, yet the order is basic to effective work with the gifted. It is this:

> **First:** thorough study of the pupils to be served and thorough understanding of their complex nature, abilities, and needs as a necessary precedent to any curriculum planning.
>
> **Next:** study, analysis, and planning of appropriate teaching procedures for a given student or group of students.
>
> **Finally:** planning and utilization of procedures and materials which are developed on the basis of knowledge of the capacities, needs, and interests of the student population, and on the basis of certain proven approaches which generate high involvement and open-ended learning by the students. This may be the development of some *few* key guiding questions and problems designed to generate curiosity and challenge students to probe the problems and issues identified as important *to them*. A few suggested available sources also should be given. The assumption is, of course, that the area of study lends itself to questions and search. The creative arts would obviously not need these.

The general approach is one which centers upon *pupil* first and which *uses* curriculum as a means for education. It is quite different from the traditional approach in which a curriculum is perceived as a fixed standard body of knowledge to be used bit by bit, and to be absorbed with limited latitude for variation in content. Much more opportunity is available for student initiative and the possibilities are limitless.

The process as outlined on the following pages and in the next chapter also is without limits. It can be used in its entirety or in parts, by one teacher or by a small study group of teachers. It is better if teachers of like interests can work together in small groups, because of opportunities to share ideas, to help one another, and to work with a knowledgeable group resource person, if one is available. This person should *not* be in a position which requires evaluation of teacher performance. Whether a teacher is in an urban area or in isolation should not preclude use of the process, however. The teacher can be in a one-room school in the Yukon and carry

on a profitable self-study, given willingness. One of the best programs in the widespread public school system for American dependents in Japan was developed by an isolated teacher who followed some of the principles detailed in this handbook, according to her program consultant.

It is crucial and mandatory that there be ***no evaluation or participation*** by principals or others who may spend time in the classroom chiefly to judge the competence of teachers. Self-study must be maintained as a private matter, with no threat, implicit or imagined. The teacher should be the one who approaches an administrator or supervisor for help in the self-study process, or know that the person is one who is fully supportive and helpful in improved teaching.

Teachers of the gifted need opportunity for experimentation and error as much as their students. It is assumed that they are able to choose the disposition of any materials they use, to erase tapes, and to keep for totally private study, or to share with others, materials which they may use or develop. The choice should be totally theirs. If they wish to show any of their efforts to administrative staff, fine; but the decision is theirs alone.

The Teacher

There are some factors which influence the success of teachers who work with the gifted. Those who contemplate teaching, or who will involve groups of teachers, may profit from study of these. All teachers do not possess all desirable traits any more than do students. Such teachers probably do not exist, and any listing of traits should be regarded as a checklist for participation in study and in work with the gifted. Since no one is perfect, the lists should also be regarded as ultimate criteria, to be used toward a long-range growth process.

Among the traits basic to work with the gifted is superior intelligence. It is difficult, if not impossible, for an average person to identify with some of the problems and needs of the gifted. Not all bright teachers choose to work with the gifted, obviously, and the reasons vary. But the ones who do should be of high ability. It also is vital that the teacher be mature psychologically, able to work with younger persons who may take exception to his assertions without being threatened. He must be willing to use freely other resources when his own knowledge is inadequate. The mature person is not necessarily a status person within the profession, and may be very young with only a short time in teaching. Age, rank, or years served are not necessarily a guarantee of maturity, as we know.

A rich fund of information, which often accompanies high intelligence and the concomitant traits of intellectual curiosity and versatility, also is highly important. This is especially true of teachers in the middle and secondary grades. It helps, too, if the teacher excels in a given field, although it is virtually impossible

for the teacher to surpass the knowledge of the gifted in all areas. If one has studied in depth in a given field, that person is very aware of the satisfaction to the young gifted person who can do the same. A teacher who has done this tends to be secure in a topical area and is aware of significant ideas and possibilities for those who may delve into it. The teacher also is able to know and use other resources freely and effectively.

Much of the above is preliminary, although the matter of information is a continuing process. Also continuing is the total study process, which makes the already excellent significantly better, as we found[18]. The teacher who works to create a classroom and school atmosphere of freedom to pursue intellectual and creative activities in depth, who provides wide opportunities for learning, and who encourages unusual ideas and imaginative products is the ideal. All of this takes time and effort toward self-improvement. The reward comes in greater satisfaction in creative, non-sterile teaching and leadership.

Initial Steps in Study Process

To assess the current status of one's attitudes toward the gifted, it is helpful to take the following *Scale*, developed by Jean Wiener in another study. It should be retained by the teacher and taken again at the end of a year's period of time.

WIENER ATTITUDE SCALE*

This questionnaire has been devised to measure your attitudes. There are no "right" answers and no "wrong" answers. The only right answer is the one which best reflects your true personal opinion toward the question considered.

To answer questions, choose the answer below which corresponds most closely with your personal attitude toward the particular question, and place the corresponding number in the space provided at the left.

+ (plus) 3 for strongly agree	- (minus) 3 for strongly disagree
+ (plus) 2 for agree	- (minus) 2 for disagree
+ (plus) 1 for mildly agree	- (minus) 1 for mildy disagree

_____ 1. Gifted children want to take too much of class time.

_____ 2. There should be a change in the grading system for gifted students in special classes for the gifted.

_____ 3. The aptitude of a given child is the primary consideration in the screening and selection of gifted children.

_____ 4. Gifted children should remain in heterogeneous classes because they will spend their lives with all types of people.

_____ 5. Gifted children develop cliques and exclude the rest of the class.

---

*Permission is given to the readers of this document to use the scale as individuals and on a private basis. Those interested in data on studies or in use of the scale with groups for research purposes are asked by Dr. Wiener to contact her for related information of value. Her address: Educational Program Audit Unit, Division of Research and Pupil Personnel, Office of the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools, 9300 East Imperial Highway, Downey, California 90242.

_____ 6. Gifted children make great progress when placed in special classes.

_____ 7. The most important kind of ability to single out for consideration in a gifted child program is intellectual or mental ability.

_____ 8. Too many supplies are given to gifted children and denied to the other children.

_____ 9. Teachers should be selected on the basis of personality in addition to knowledge for instructing gifted classes.

_____10. Parents of gifted children interfere with the teachers and the teaching of the children.

_____11. Singling out gifted students for special treatment results in the establishment of an elite class.

_____12. The rigidity of teachers and administrators has acted as a buffer against more effective programs for the gifted.

_____13. Special classes and special teachers should be offered to the gifted children.

_____14. It is wiser to accelerate the gifted in the elementary school than in the secondary school.

_____15. Teachers become too interested in the gifted and neglect the average and below average in the classroom.

_____16. Gifted children stimulate each other to greater enthusiasm, effort, and accomplishments.

_____17. Gifted children tend to display a degrading disrespect for the teacher.

_____18. There is a tendency to slight the gifted children when there is a wide range of ability in a class.

_____19. The school has to be concerned with the fundamental learnings and skills for all children and not with programs for special abilities and needs.

_____20. It is more important to provide special services for the handicapped child than for the gifted.

_____21. When considering acceleration for the gifted, too much emphasis is placed on the social and emotional factors rather than intellectual growth.

_____22. Gifted children show sustained intellectual capacity proved by repeatedly high intelligence test ratings.

_____23. It is a wise educational procedure to require the gifted child to assist the slower learners.

_____24. Too many high IQ's together create many problems—the interests are too great and varied for the teacher.

_____25. Having a gifted class carries special esteem for the teacher.

_____26. Gifted students can be taught more effectively when grouped with other gifted children than when grouped with non-gifted children.

_____27. The IQ of a child is not a fair estimate of his ability.

_____28. Teachers should have special qualifications if they are to work with the gifted.

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Another step in preparation for self-improvement can be taken if one has access to a tape recorder. This is a tape-recording of a discussion conducted with a group in which the gifted pupil(s) participate. The tape should be made of a planned lesson in an area conducive to a fairly great amount of discussion. This tape should be kept for comparison to one made after a period of time (four to six months). After it is made, it may be subjected to a preliminary analysis by using items 8, 9, 14, if appropriate, and 16 and 17 of the Scale on pages 20 and 21. Other materials of help in the improvement of discussion techniques will appear in Chapter Four.

The third and final step preliminary to any special study is the private taking of the ***Rating Scale of Significant Behaviors in Teachers of the Gifted***. The completion of the ***Frequently*** category on this scale must be regarded as an ultimate goal, with many of the items representing an ideal which may or may not be attained during one's teaching career. I do not believe that initial perfection is to be found. The scale should be taken at the start of study and again after a few months.

The scale was developed through tentative development of items, search of the literature for qualities important in teaching the gifted, refinement, evaluation by ten experts, item analysis, and through factor analysis. Further discussion appears in Chapter Four. Most of the items deal with the teaching process.

Martinson–Wiener
Rating Scale of Significant Behaviors in Teachers of the Gifted

Rater _____

Ratee _____

Date _____

School _____

Grade Level _____

Length of Observation _____

Subject(s) being taught _____

To the Rater: A minimum of 40 minutes should be used for each observation. Use every opportunity to examine folios of materials, files of children's products, and other evidence, as well as teacher behavior, to confirm impressions.

Teaching Process	1 Seldom	2 Occasionally	3 Frequently
1. Utilizes specialized pupil interests constructively.			
a. Students work in areas of interest.	___	___	___
b. Teacher capitalizes on student interest in classroom.	___	___	___
2. Utilizes special talents and abilities of the students.			
a. Students are involved in activities which display or include their special abilities and talents.	___	___	___
b. Individualized materials are available for development of special talents and abilities.	___	___	___
3. Encourages self-selection of materials			
a. Students have freedom to select materials at high conceptual levels of difficulty.	___	___	___
b. Teacher encourages pupils to make own selections and decisions.	___	___	___
4. Makes classwork interesting through use of different sense media.			
a. Teacher encourages effective pupil displays, not teacher-made displays.	___	___	___
b. Teacher uses maps, charts, TV, radio, and/or films to augment or advance the qualities of instruction.	___	___	___
5. Maintains or uses classroom resource center containing materials at appropriate advanced levels.			
a. Learning resources are openly available to students.	___	___	___
b. Teacher serves as a resource to pupils.	___	___	___
6. Clarifies classroom goals and purposes using broad concepts rather than detail.			
a. Relates discussion to course objectives.	___	___	___
b. Student's performance indicates understanding of course objectives.	___	___	___
7. Uses varied teaching strategies effectively.			
a. Teacher is sensitive to students' responses, both verbal and non-verbal.	___	___	___
1. Teacher responds to visible cues in physical behavior of students.	___	___	___
2. Teacher uses student verbal reactions to extend student insights and understandings.	___	___	___
8. Conducts group discussions skillfully.			
a. Teacher withholds own ideas and conclusions.	___	___	___
b. Teacher encourages participation of students in discussions.	___	___	___
9. Selects questions that stimulate higher-level thinking.			
a. Questions encourage students to draw analogies and to indicate relationships.	___	___	___
b. Students are able to ask analytic questions.	___	___	___
c. Students generalize from concrete to abstract at advanced levels.	___	___	___

	1 Seldom	2 Occasionally	3 Frequently
10. Utilizes synthesis and analysis in appropriate areas.			
a. Teacher utilizes effectively inductive and deductive reasoning and is able to apply techniques in classroom.	___	___	___
b. Teacher assists and/or encourages students to relate theory to practice.	___	___	___
11. Draws examples and explanations from various sources and related fields.			
a. Interrelationships are emphasized by teacher and students.	___	___	___
12. Presents activities that challenge and stimulate the students.			
a. Students are eager to work on activities.	___	___	___
b. Teacher varies the kind of assignment to the learning abilities and interests of the students.	___	___	___
c. Teacher emphasis is on broad ideas and not drill and rote memory activities.	___	___	___
13. Utilizes evaluation in various forms.			
a. Teacher helps students in self-evaluation and self-improvement.	___	___	___
14. Encourages independent thinking, including difference of opinion.			
a. Students are encouraged to examine thoroughly and accurately controversial issues.	___	___	___
1. Students compare and contrast different issues, using objective evidence.	___	___	___
15. Gives appropriate encouragement to pupils.			
a. Teacher gives praise when deserved.	___	___	___
b. Teacher makes students feel worthy.	___	___	___
c. Teacher provides for recognition of outstanding creative and/or scholarly performance.	___	___	___
16. Understands and encourages student ideas.			
a. Teacher encourages students to try new approaches.	___	___	___
b. Teacher is tolerant to students' attempts to find solutions of problems.	___	___	___
c. Teacher encourages "guesses" by students and facilitates evaluation of guesses by students.	___	___	___
d. Teacher helps students to realize that research involves trial and error.			
1. Students are encouraged to apply principles of scientific procedure.	___	___	___
Teacher Background			
17. Is unthreatened by own mistakes.			
a. Teacher is undisturbed and unembarrassed by own mistakes or criticism of students.	___	___	___
18. Teacher displays enthusiasm and employs humor constructively.			
a. Teacher is energetic and animated.	___	___	___
Summary Item:			
19. Demonstrates understanding of the educational implications of giftedness.			
a. Teacher uses implications of characteristics in the classroom operation, selection of materials, schedules, and questions.	___	___	___

The teacher will now want to initiate the efforts for his pupils. I suggest that time be taken to study closely the following list of characteristics of the gifted.*

In the following items, check the column which best describes the child's functioning:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GIFTED

	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Most of the Time
a. Learns rapidly and easily.	____	_____	____	_____
b. Thinks clearly, recognizes implied relationships, comprehends meanings.	____	_____	____	_____
c. Reads above grade level.	____	_____	____	_____
d. Retains what he has heard or read without appearing to need much rote or drill.	____	_____	____	_____
e. Has large vocabulary.	____	_____	____	_____
f. Is independent, individualistic, self-sufficient.	____	_____	____	_____
g. Is curious, investigative.	____	_____	____	_____
h. Asks penetrating, searching questions.	____	_____	____	_____
i. Has long attention span.	____	_____	____	_____
j. Produces original products or ideas.	____	_____	____	_____
k. Prefers complex ideas.	____	_____	____	_____

It is also helpful to contact or request contact for access to one of the following available audiovisual materials on the characteristics of the gifted:

Understanding the Gifted, 33 minutes, color film Churchill Films, Beverly Hills, California. Portrays a variety of gifted and talented students from public school programs, in interviews, individual performances, and situations.

Sit Down, Shut Up, or Get Out, 50 minutes, color film National Council of Churches Film Exchange, Franklin Lakes, New Jersey. Shows the plight of the gifted child and how love and support from other individuals can greatly affect his life.

What changes do you envision as necessary in a school in order to meet the needs of the persons portrayed in the films?

From this point on, teachers and especially isolated teachers will want to select those processes which can be carried out in a given situation. A number of the materials and processes can be used anywhere, but not all. Representative materials are given for various grade levels. Obviously, teachers will concentrate on those which are most relevant, although possibilities for application or adaptation should not be overlooked.

---

*From a form used by the Davis Joint Unified School District, California. A number of other excellent examples also appear in this document[17].

Teachers will want to read about the gifted as widely as possible, too. I suggest the following books as good sources for understanding the traits and needs of the population. Some of them may be available for loan in school system or county system libraries.

Gallagher, J. J. *Teaching the Gifted Child*, Second Edition, Boston: Allyn, Bacon & Company, 1975.

Gold, M. J. *Education of the Intellectually Gifted*, Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1965.

Marland, S. P. *Education of the Gifted and Talented*, Volume 2, Background Papers, Washington: Government Printing Office, Paperback (Part A), 1971.

A source which has nothing to do with traits, but which is enjoyable to teachers who work to minimize the dulling impact of school structure is that of Townsend[31].

If a file of information on the gifted student(s) in one's class is not already available, one should be developed. Unlike the handicapped, studies on the gifted are fairly easy to compile. Parents are cooperative in supplying a wealth of information; and gifted pupils themselves can write responses to various questionnaires, or write on topics as class assignments and furnish much information of value to the teacher.

Painless Collection of Information

On pages 25 to 29 appear a number of forms which can be filled out by pupils and parents, for the most part. Not all will be used, of course. For those that are, all that needs to be done is to have them reproduced, if the school has aides, secondary students who type well, parent classroom aides, or secretarial assistance for the preparation of the copies. In more rural situations, where such assistance may not be available, a willing community person may be able to assist the teacher. It usually is possible for the teacher to find some way of avoiding the use of time for clerical tasks, and this should be done.

While forms are being typed and reproduced for use, the teacher has a number of sources for helpful information. A conference with the previous year's teacher(s) will give much insight into their reactions to a given pupil and often valuable information about special capacities and needs. This teacher, or teachers, also may discuss original or creative products, beautiful and unusually sensitive poems, paintings or other art forms, or music contributions of the student, as well as highly advanced, unusual concepts or theories, and awareness of societal needs not evinced by classmates. Or it may be highly advanced performance in learning which has not been shown in the present classroom to any extent.

Librarians also should be consulted, since many of them are aware of special interests and abilities not apparent in the classroom, as well as the qualities mentioned above.

It is helpful to include samples of unusually advanced productions in the cumulative file of the student, not only for the present year, but for the use of future teachers. Photographs of products sometimes must displace the real object, of course.

Parents can make contributions in two ways. The most comprehensive information will come through the biography. This probably will be requested in a conference, although a note to a parent stating that *X* is a child who has shown some unusual interests and abilities, and the teacher would like to know him or her better can be an alternative, if necessary. In either case, the parent should be encouraged to start with the child's earliest development and give information on development, special qualities, and anything else that is informational about the child as a person. Parents tend to write complete biographies which often become the most complete and valuable insight into the student contained in the folder. The lengthy biography of J. on pages 82-85 of a companion publication.[17] is an illustration. As was true in this case, the writer has never found or heard of a parent unwilling to furnish a biography of a bright child to a teacher!

A special problem may occur in the case of parents whose native language or limited formal schooling prevent them from writing easily. In these cases, interviews should be used. This is a desirable policy either for the biography or for the form which follows.

Another way to elicit information from parents is through the use of a form given to parents of all pupils in a heterogeneous classroom. The returns can then be scanned for information on a child who is gifted or assumed to be. This form, which appears next, is best used at the primary level and at the beginning of the year, although it may be used throughout the elementary grades.

PARENT INFORMATION ON CHILD

To add to the understanding that I have of the children in my class, I am asking each parent to give me the following information. Thank you for your help.

_____
Teacher

_____
Pupil's Name

1. Describe the special interests of your child.

2. Child's special talents or skills.

3. Child's reading interest (favorite book: type, titles)

4. Child's hobbies or collections.

5. Special opportunities child has had (trips, private lessons, etc.)

6. Child's special needs at home.

7. Child's special needs at school.

For elementary pupils, ***autobiographies*** are appropriate and reveal much to a discerning teacher. Tape recorders may be used by younger pupils to furnish the stories about themselves orally.

Pupils can fill out ***inventories*** such as the following with no effort by the teacher, if they are writing reasonably well.

INTEREST INVENTORY—ELEMENTARY

1. What are your favorite TV programs?_____

_____

2. What are the best books you have read this year?_____

_____

3. What do you like to do best for fun or recreation?_____

_____

4. What are your hobbies?_____

_____

5. What do you like to do best with your family?_____

_____

6. Have you taken any trips?_____ Where did you go?_____

_____

7. What would you like to be when you grow up?_____

_____

8. Do you like school?_____ What do you like best about school?_____

_____

9. If you dislike school, tell why._____

_____

10. Do you take any lessons outside of school?_____ If so, what do you study?

_____

11. If you would like to write a paragraph about yourself which you would consider interesting to other people, write it on the back.

Secondary students (junior and senior high) fill out the form which appears below without objection, unless they have marked problems. Responses to it can be pinpointed to plan for gifted students.

INTEREST INVENTORY—SECONDARY

So that we may look at ways to provide for as many special interest areas as possible, will you please take a few minutes to fill out the following items. Think beyond special programs now offered, such as orchestra, athletics, and others. Make your response as clear and complete as possible. Your help will assist us in planning added offerings, and your response will be kept confidential. Thank you

1. Describe your hobbies and special interests. Omit the purely social, please.

2. Describe any special experiences you have had because of your interests.

3. Describe any special training you have had in your interest area.

4. What are your favorite subjects?

5. If you had a half day of free time during the week, how would you like to use it? Be specific.

6. If money were no problem, what career would you choose? Why?

Teachers of students who have had different language or cultural backgrounds, or whose opportunities have been severely circumscribed by poverty, transience, health, or other problems may wish to consider the following items on the form below. Since this is obviously filled out by the teacher, central office stenographic assistance should be used to make a number of copies available.

Los Angeles Unified School District
Counseling and Psychological Services Section

State Gifted Program—Separate Criteria Checklist

Name of Pupil _____ Grade _____ Date _____
Last First

School _____ Teacher _____

Subject *(Secondary)* _____

1. Evidence of Possible Giftedness
   a. Please indicate the degree to which the pupil exhibits the following characteristics. *(Mark only those characteristicts that have been observed.)*

	Slight	Moderate	Marked
1. Takes initiative and shows independence of action	____	_____	_____
2. Shows leadership ability	____	_____	_____
3. Exhibits adaptive social reasoning and/or behavior	____	_____	_____
4. Is alert, observant, shows curiosity	____	_____	_____
5. Shows motivation and drive, enjoys challenge	____	_____	_____
6. Learns easily through experiences	____	_____	_____
7. Retains and uses ideas and information	____	_____	_____
8. Can transfer learning from one situation to another	____	_____	_____
9. Demonstrates fluency in verbal expression	____	_____	_____
10. Has a fund of information and range of vocabulary	____	_____	_____
11. Has varied interests	____	_____	_____
12. Shows imagination, originality, and creativity	____	_____	_____
13. Is flexible and resourceful in problem solving	____	_____	_____
14. Demonstrates abstract thinking	____	_____	_____
15. Has a sense of humor	____	_____	_____
16. Demonstrates persistence in tasks	____	_____	_____
17. Shows facility in learning English, if bilingual	____	_____	_____

   b. Other evidence of giftedness *(i.e., art, music, drama, mechanical aptitudes, athletics, etc.)*

_____

_____

_____

c. Tests of academic potential *(as available)*

Group Test	IQ	Individual Test	IQ	Verbal IQ	Perf. IQ

While forms are being reproduced and information is being compiled by parents or students, as the case may be, teachers will want to delve into the following case studies. All are of real students in varying circumstances. They should provoke thought and provide some cues on factors to avoid or consider as one plans for his own gifted student. The first one is far longer than the ones which follow it because of the detailed information by one teacher and the reactions of other teachers. All of this information is included because it is valuable to evaluate the reactions of teachers and others to the gifted and to assess the ways in which they provide for them.

For each study, the teacher should consider the following three questions. If a group of teachers uses them, it is helpful to set the questions up on work sheets, with a separate sheet for each study, so that notes can be made for discussion purposes.

1. What provisions should be made for learning of maximum effectiveness to take place?
2. If you were the teacher, how would you "handle" a student with these characteristics in your classroom?
3. What are the implications of this study for your own present and future work with the gifted?

CASE STUDIES OF GIFTED CHILDREN

CASE STUDY OF JOHN____*

Material courtesy of Thomas Mooney, Palos Verdes Unified School District, West Rolling Hills, California, in partial fulfillment of obligations in an inservice course taught by the author.

INTRODUCTION

This is not truly a case study of an individual student as such; rather it is an accumulation of information, ideas, dialogues, and questions which arose in our school setting when we attempted to study the problems of a given child. The writer found that a tremendous amount of teacher concern and involvement needed to be expressed about *just how we went about doing things at our school*.

This report then revolves around John ____, an extremely talented 13 year old boy, a seventh grader, whose particular gifts and problems furnish a springboard for teacher expression.

The writer (or accumulator, so to speak) has brought together a variety of materials which were avilable in their original form, and has asked teachers to respond in written or tape recorded form and/or by personal interview.

My Experiences, by John____

6th Grade

I first came to this school in the sixth grade. I started this year with Mr. F____ as my science and math teacher and Mrs. G____ as my English-social studies teacher. Mrs. G____ was a quiet teacher and never seemed to get angry. I suppose I took advantage of the situation and read all the time. This didn't do much to help my grades. In math and science I did fairly well, I liked math, but in science we had a lot of dull stuff to study. I talked a lot and he would always be assigning sentences for me to write 25 times. I didn't do most of them, though. He had a bad memory and usually forgot he ever assigned them to me. My main friends were, at the start of the year, Jack, Sam and, most of all Martin. Mrs. G____ got married and we were going to have this lady who treated us like babies. At the last second she had to move so we had Mrs. F____, instead. We readily accepted Mrs. F____ because she was so much nicer than the other lady. Paul, who had always been very well-behaved, suddenly became a goof-off under Mrs. G____ We all were getting a little rowdy, however. Mrs. G____ didn't mind a wisecrack if it was funny. We used to have a great time with those.

7th Grade

At the start of 7th Grade I had Mrs. S____ for ESS, Mr. R____ for math, Mr. C____ for Spanish, Mrs. C____ for science, and Mr. I____ for P.E. My favorite classes were ESS and science and math. I never got along with Mr. C____ I really wasn't able to memorize, and Mr. C____ was always insinuating I smelled. It really wasn't a very nice situation. Mrs. C____'s class I liked though because she made the dull curriculum interesting and made us think. Mrs. S____ made us do a lot of reports which I always did at the last moment. We had a lot of interesting discussions though on real issues.

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*Abridged version. A highly gifted boy is selected to emphasize the contrasts and problems posed by pupil deviation from the usual and to stress the need for adaptations in structure and personnel. The name is fictitious. The facts are real. Much credit for this study must go to Barbara Covey, one of John's teachers. A less condensed summary of this study appears in reference[18] of the bibliography.

She made us do a lot of creative writing which I enjoyed a lot. Mr. R____'s class was interesting because I was able to forge ahead from the class' progress. I always did my homework in class the day it was due. Every now and then to prove to Mr. R____ that I didn't do that I would go to the board and solve problems from last nights homework while I was up there. I never had a social problem in that class. I got along pretty well with everybody. Peter used to write notes on the desk to the girl who sat there after him. I used to erase them and rewrite them and mess up the works. Mr. R____always seemed so shocked by petty cheating and slightly unpatriotic things. He had a very high sense of morals and integrity. The class went too slow though. It was beyond half of the people and below the others. Some guys were in there who really didn't belong there.

Description of John____ by Mrs. A.____

Your request that I fill out a Teacher's Recommendation for John has proven to be a most frustrating experience for me!

John has talked to me about a private school. He indicated that he would like very much to attend the school. I heartily recommend that you accept his application.

John is an unbelievably complex character to define. Your form just doesn't ask the right questions. For this reason, I have chosen to answer in a personal letter of recommendation.

It would be absoutely correct to say that John is a meditative intellectual. He sets personal standards of excellence for himself that far exceed any standards commonly set up by his teachers.

On the other hand, it would be equally correct to call him an impetuous extrovert. He has the soul of a poet, but can be a devil in a classroom.

I, personally, find him more stimulating to talk to than most of my adult friends. For example: today John was held after school on detention because of misbehavior in somebody's class. I gave him a ride home, since I was going that way. Our conversation ranged from Crane to Brook Farm, 19th Century haven of the Transcendentalists. John affirms that Crane should have limited his writings to poetry and short pieces, and that Crane's prose is undistinguished except for the individual paragraphs which are built with profound power. He expressed dissatisfaction with the name "Brook Farm." Said it reminded him of *Animal Farm* with its symbols of communism. Stopped at this point in our conversation to consider whether or not Orwell may have had such a parallel in mind; wants to reread *Animal Farm* again to see if, perhaps, Orwell may have been parodying Brook Farm rather than early communism.

John is an inveterate reader and can not pass a table with an open book on it without stopping to dip in it.

When I showed my classes a wonderful fossil found by a student in the science section, John told us that he had found a similar fossil some years ago which men at the Los Angeles museum had identified as from a whale which swam above Palos Verdes some five million years ago. My science student later verified this identification at the museum, himself.

One day I was trying to sell my class on the unbelievable delights of scholastic research, and gave as an example my own pleasure in the college literature course I am presently taking. I told them that we were studying Kafka, and that I'd found the initial lecture unbearably exciting because "I didn't understand a word the professor said in it." John appeared to be engrossed in my comments and showed up the next day with a copy of *The Trial* which he had checked out of the library. He has followed closely my subsequent struggles with Kafka, and read with interest my lecture on the symbolism of the hands, in *The Trial*. (I can't think of another person in the world, outside of members of the class I attend, who would find this subject inspiring!)

Do you understand what I am trying to say? This is no idle attempt on his part to try to "butter up" his teacher, for John just doesn't have the time for that sort of deception. He is really, honestly, dedicated to the total range of human knowledge. I am sure our tests just do not measure his capacity for learning, in spite of the fact that he was tested as being in the 99th percentile, SCAT test, last fall.

On the other hand, John has a limitless capacity for fun. He has a sure ear for the pompous or the ridiculous, and has not yet learned enough tact to keep his amusement to himself. He teases and bedevils his companions—tried to feed a pal's pencil to a sea anemone in my salt water aquarium and encountered the wrath of both the pal and his teacher! Recently, he was working in my little chemistry laboratory and emerged with a harried look on his face. I asked what was going on, and he responded, deadpan, "Would you believe that it was just a small explosion?"

He is absolutely an innocent in terms of his relationships with his teachers. John still cannot understand why he was kicked out of the classes of two different teachers—all he did was ask questions! Now, I know the kinds of questions he asks. They are penetrating and devastating, and I can verify, pose a problem for the teacher involved. One of his favorite comments is: "But that just doesn't make sense!" I've learned, painfully, that if John says it doesn't make sense, it probably doesn't. Either that or I have skipped a step in my presentation so that he has not followed the logic of it. When John is bored with classwork, he disappears behind a book or else creates a disturbance. If the subject captures his imagination, he wants to pursue it much farther than other students want to go.

One day we were discussing techniques used by students to "upstage" a teacher. I want to make him aware of the sort of thing he does which rubs teachers the wrong way. I told him of a former student of mine who now informs me that he has given up all those "childish" tricks and finds that a well-placed yawn does the same thing admirably. The following day I was introducing "causes of the Civil War" to my classes and had my back turned to the students as I wrote on the board. From John's seat I heard an extended, squeaky, obvious, out-loud, tongue-in-cheek yawn! It broke me up, to his intense delight, but I managed to snarl something threatening over my shoulder and he got right to work.

John has been accelerated one year ahead of his grade level. In spite of this, and the fact that he is placed in our most accelerated sections, he is virtually self-educated. He "over-learns" at every point!

My classes are presently doing individual research on some aspect of the Nineteenth Century. John read widely and almost never did get a paper written because of his own indecision as to what he wanted to study in additional depth. He finally settled for "Aspects of the Franco-Prussian War Which Made World War I Inevitable." Before that he had considered the changes in philosophy as reflected in the literature of the period, a comparison of Marx and Nietzche, and so forth.

Because he is constantly thinking of so many things, he is absolutely unorganized. He tried, once, to explain his dilemma to me. As I remember it, he feels as if he is swimming in a sea of facts and information, none of which assumes any form for him. Obviously, then, my lectures which help him organize his thinking receive avid attention. For instance, I am currently trying to establish in our thinking a parallelism between music and literature of any given period such as the Romantic period. He is "with" me at every step. (Contrast this with the yawn over "causes of the Civil War.") It is difficult for any teacher to get him really interested in a lecture—he can hardly wait to get away and read a book on the subject which will give him the *whole* picture!

This lack of organization extends to pens and pencils and paper and books—to time limitations—to deadlines—to his notebook. One day he was delivering himself of a voluble dissertation on animals of the tidepools. I interrupted to ask what class he had first period (thinking I might be able to get him excused so that he could go with my science class to the tidepools as sort of a visiting specialist). He gave me a terribly blank look, still concentrating upon the tidepool animals, and then replied with a far-away look, "well, let's see. I get off the bus, and then I walk to my locker, and then—oh, yes! Physical Education." His notebook is quite unbelievable, to the intense frustration of his more organized teachers. Just one part remains intact, the plastic zipper bag commonly used to carry pens and pencils. I asked him why he didn't put some pens and pencils in it, so that he wouldn't have to borrow constantly from his friends. He claimed that this was deliberate—that he carried his bus pass therein, and since he never unzippered it he never lost his pass!

In short, John is a remarkably bright lad, distinguished by a humorous disposition, profound insight, a ready wit, a contemplative intelligence, and a dedication to the acquiring of precise knowledge.

Progress Report on John, by Mrs. A_____

The question has been asked: "What can the schools do for students like John?" Candidly, I must admit that we can do very little which can be laid out in precisely drawn guidelines for others to emulate. Rarely do we find individuals who have John's rare combination of extreme talent and extreme creativity (or non-conformity, perhaps).

Parenthetically, one of my major concerns has to do with the extremely bright child who has been trained to be conforming. We give them the label "bright" and we notify their parents by putting them in top classes, and we proceed to imply that something is wrong with them, then, if they do not get *A*'s. And how does a student get *A*'s—by following the directions of a teacher precisely, of course! It's a rare child, and John is one, who has strength of character enough to hold out against all of these pressures and accept the *B*'s and sometimes *C*'s which he deserves when he departs too widely from teacher-established norms!

And so, because John is self-directed by parents who know the direction, as well as talented, he has created his own educational world. He can be lured into learning at his own level—it's difficult to direct him to do so.

My own efforts have reflected this fact. In one instance I was successful, in the other not-at-all. I'll deal with my failure first.

Because I know that gifted young people should be led into making generalizations and into seeing causes and effects, it seemed to me that one area for study in my classes might well be the relationship between the music and the literature of any given historical period, particularly as reflected in the philosophy of the same historical period. I involved our music teacher in my planning, to the point that he volunteered to teach our combined sections a few times. I would discuss the literature of, say, the romatic period— then he would discuss and play examples of the music of the same period. Meanwhile, the class was studying the history of the times and trying to evolve some understanding of the philosophy which guided all this. John was less than interested (as far as I have even been able to detect) and misbehaved the first time I took him to the music teacher's room passing notes and drawing pictures and doing all those miserable things which we decry in our students. He later explained to me that he had acted this way because he had already heard Mr. G_____'s little lecture about the Beginnings of Music in a course last year. After I "leaned on" him a bit, he behaved for subsequent lectures. I've never felt that the experience was very inspiring for him—on the other hand, I did capture a couple of young ladies in my net, so the series was not a complete loss by any means.

The successful effort was an outgrowth of this program. When we examined the "surrealistic" period, I read aloud sections from Samuel Beckett's *Murphy*. I asked the classes to try to decide what Beckett meant in these passages, and was purely delighted to have John ask that I loan him the book. Now, aside from the fact that I structured this one particular lesson with John in mind and in an effort to capture his interest, the remainder of the program has been almost completely John-directed!

(The classes had already had a brief exposure to surrealism when we viewed the award-winning film *The Red Balloon*, and each student was asked to try to interpret what the film meant to him: "What is your personal 'red balloon'?" and so forth. John had derived particular joy from trying to attempt, with me, to follow the pattern of the background music—it *is* interesting to note that the first time we hear church bells is when the menacing boys are first beginning to pursue the little boy with the balloon!)

It would be impossible to detail all the lines of instruction-learning which went into John's mastery of Beckett. At least half of the time I was the learner. Together we attacked the total problem of what-is-Beckett-saying-in-*Murphy*? The total result of our studies has been that John had prepared a paper about *Murphy* which is at least equal to those prepared by students in my college class, all of whom are candidates for the doctorate in comparative literature—my personal feeling is that his paper is superior to any I've heard read about the same material.

Techniques of teaching? Impossible to boil down into "lesson plans" – in a word, we have been two friends with a mutual interest, a mutual intellectual problem. Our relationship has been distinguished for its complete informality. As an example, he phoned me one evening to tell me he had just played out the chess game which is a climax to the book and had discovered that Mr. Endon did *not* win the game, as I had supposed from related footnotes and discussion in the book. We both found this marvelously revealing and were extremely excited about it. *He* discovered that Murphy was non-Newtonian; *I* reacted with information relating to the continuing arguments between Newtonian philosophers and Cartesian philosophers; and *he* nailed the total book down to an exposition of Cartesian philosophy!

Right now, I'm engaged in marking passages in Will Durant's *The Story of Philosophy*, preparatory to loaning it to John. Both John and I feel that Beckett is still an unsolved riddle—it may be that *Murphy* is a satire of all philosophies. Why, for instance, does the book continue for some 75 pages after the death of Murphy? There is still the problem of the man upstairs, and of Mr. Kelly, and of Celia, whose importance cannot be summarized in her physical attractions.

John, then, is now operating at his level—broad philosophic concepts as to the nature of reality, appreciation of intellectual inquiry, understanding of great literature. Typical of the advances made by this highly gifted young man is the fact that he finds Thornton Wilder's *Bridge of San Luis Rey* tepid and uninspiring. (After Beckett, only the "truly greats" will satisfy.)

Now I believe the same sort of thing could have happened this year for John in any of a multitude of fields. If he had happened to get a teacher with a passion for physics, John probably would have made the same advances. Belatedly, I realized that it was possible for him to have such a physics instructor. I happened to sit beside C. D., the high school physics instructor, at a board of education meeting last week, and let him read John's paper on Beckett during a lull in the proceedings. He was very impressed, and when I commented that he ought to have John in his 11th grade physics class right now. C. D. said for me to send him along to the class that meets at 8 a.m., before our school gets started. This could have been going on all year! I have a feeling we are too late, at this point. It's too near the end of the term—John is tired of school and just waiting for summer to come—it's difficult for him to get to the 8 a.m. class, and he must ride his bike from high school to our

school—just too many problems involved. It's a shame. Both John and C. D. would have gloried in the mutual intellectual stimulation which they could have afforded for one another!

I do have one other thing to mention, in terms of John's relationships with others, and would like to comment on his acceptance by other students as well as his non-acceptance by teachers.

Teachers must be extremely careful when dealing with individual students on a tutorial basis. The balance of the class tend to see the situation as a teacher's-pet-relationship, which indeed it may be. I was moving in very dangerous waters every time I spent class time talking to John, every time I excused him to study in the library or in a semi-private little study room I have. Such "preferential" treatment is bound to arouse jealousy among other students. However, as far as I have been able to determine, such has not been the case this term. "They" (the other students) continue to hold him in the same esteem they did previously—for example, there was the situation regarding the band concert! John noticed that everybody wearing suits and ties was excused from class at 9:30 to participate in the band concert—so, naturally, he wore his suit and tie and stood up and left class with members of the band—this in spite of the fact that he is NOT in the band. He had three free hours, as a result, which he spent backstage chatting with members of the chorus who were not on stage at the moment. The marvel, of course is that nobody "finked." Everybody knew what he was doing, but nobody told any authority figure! I can't think of any other student who could have gotten away with such a blatant activity with such immunity! How does he maintain such a position? Typical of his relationships with other students: last week he mailed an overly toasted piece of bread to another very bright boy with a slip of paper signed "Regards, John"; recently he accompanied my science class to the beach, discovered an octopus under a rock, and drew a dozen boys into the activity of lifting the rock and capturing the creature, forming firm friendships with many of them as a result; recently he and a small group of students investigated a trap door near the ceiling of my room together and found a neat little attic hidden behind the door. The point is: he is never dull to be around. They like this.

And now, as regards his relationships with teachers! This certainly is another situation entirely! At school we do *not* have flexible scheduling, but through judicious juggling on his part, John has about as much flexibility in his schedule as though we did! (And I'm the one who gets juggled, I'll admit. Because I believe he profits from a great deal of freedom, I go along with his maneuvers.) There was the day when he insisted his stomach muscles were entirely too sore from weekend activities for him to engage in physical education—but when he got excused from P.E., he was nowhere too muscle-bound to have to stay at school when my class went to the beach! And he is constantly too involved in his studies to get to his next class on time, and so must have an "admit slip" and, incidentally, misses a great portion of the next class. He tells me that his ideal school would be one in which there are no scheduled classes, no bells to ring—in which he had the utmost freedom to read when he wants, wander about when he wants, just sit when he wants, chat with his friends or teachers when he wants. Do not misunderstand: this is not his means for avoiding work. He would get a better education if this *were* a reality. Last year he told me that teachers were always interrupting his thinking. I'm sure that we do just that!

But teachers tend to decry such freedom on the part of students. John just got a citation for being tardy to one of his classes three times—this in spite of the fact that the class in question is one in dramatics, and John was not a participating member of the cast those particular days. John claims those three days were study-hall for him, so why was it important for him to be on time? Along the same line, I took him with me the day that I was to judge the science fair at another school. (It seemed wise from two points of view: there

was no reason for inflicting him on a substitute, and he could be valuable to me in making my judgments.) He discovered a flaw in the project which teachers at the other school had assured me might well be considered for First Place. Flaw! The thing was a patent error, which would have made us all a laughing stock to scientifically knowledgeable parents, though I didn't know this was true until I got back to my college texts. Because I am accustomed to accepting John's word for it, when he knows that he knows something, I was willing to go along with him in his judgment. But you should have seen the reaction of the other teachers! Resentment and anger was obvious on their part—they argued with him until John backed down with the comment "Well, perhaps you are right. . ." I thought that John was, at last, learning tact in his dealings with adults but such is not the case. He assures me now that he really wasn't sure it was a mistake—that, had he been absoutely sure, nothing would have made him back down! What happened was that we gave First Place to the project, in the face of such determination on the part of the teachers; I looked it up when I got back to school; and I phoned the teacher involved and asked him to get the ribbon *off* the project, for John was right!

I have no suggestions. I know that John's best work has been done quite outside the ordinary classroom tasks I assign—and, in contrast, I am satisfied that what I am doing is good teaching in terms of the majority of the students. Very few of them are self-directed enough to profit from the absolute freedom in their education—perhaps even John would not profit from his ideal school, for then what would he have to rebel against? His best creative writing has been done when he should have been working on his geometry or his Spanish—or at home—or, once, when I excused him from answering some questions in his social studies book. His best thinking has been when he had been sent to his room to do his geometry homework. And it had nothing to do with geometry.

THREE SAMPLE POEMS by JOHN

These times have changed
And so have I.
I sit here Alone
As the world goes by
And even now wish for a little of it back.
So what does the future hold for me?
A bright brilliant emergence
into a bright brilliant world
or a dull grey graduality of existence?
The answer is there
but yet to be discovered
yet to be blown past my foothold of soul.
In a world of tangibility
Somehow I cannot grasp
A song of beauty,
The blue sky,
A cool breeze.
Will they stop and wait for me
or must I chase
never reaching, never living?
Or may I wait
and let my fate blow by
just watching?
These times are changing
And so am I.

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THE FOREST

The forest appeared
a thick wall
of separate and
separated trees.
Green hung
on dark branches,
branches the color
of the soil beneath.
The humus crackled with freshly
fallen needles,
a mat of moist death.
The stars wearily faded
from the sky
or the fragments of sky
as seen from the forest.
The sun
would soon rise.
The forest would change
its alias of death
to the mysterious twilight
of life.
But now stood the forest
introverted, absorbed,
in spinning through space
at speeds unknown
and unseen
in the
Antepurgatory of non-existence
forever.

****

In the pink sky,
after sunset,
a few gulls lazily glided over the glassy sea,
and to the east
a ring of pink and yellow tinted clouds
slowly darkened.
The night
crept on to slowly steal away
the soft colors.
A cricket chirped and a moth took flight.
Night was here.

Teacher Reaction to John

Mrs. R____, Librarian–Teacher of Library Science

Mrs. R____ reflects that John's main problem in her class was one of refusal to do routine tasks, such as dusting and stacking books. She would often find him reading in some corner after a routine work assignment had been given, and found that she would have to hound him to perform the mundane tasks of the library. When the more inspirational aspects of the library science program were discussed, Mrs. R____ found John reluctant to produce anything in the way of a written report. She attempted to overcome this problem by having John write something of his own choice that related to the library. He agreed to write a science fiction story about the library of the future, but needed the pressure of detention after school and eventually the detention itself to complete the assignment. Mrs. R____ relates that the story was not very good!

The one successful experience that Mrs. R____ recalls was on an occasion where John questioned the placement of a book in the Dewey Decimal System. There was apparently a good spirit of give and take in this discussion. John, on the other hand, seemed to delight in giving her a "bad time", such as the occasion where he deliberately needled her (which John later admitted) by saying, "Why don't you have any science books worth reading? These are all baby books. Who picks out these books, anyway?" Mrs. R____ admits that she rose to the bait.

Mrs. R____ recalls an occasion when John was a 6th grader that his mother spoke to her about a concern that John was reading too many Hardy Boy books, and shouldn't he be concerned with reading a better quality material. Mrs. R____'s response was that John was only ten years old, and that an interest in Hardy Boys was typical of his age; that she should not press for deeper material until he himself showed an interest.

In attempts to discuss the problem of getting along with others. Mrs. R____ recalls that John's general attitude was one of "you don't have to get along if you are smart enough."

Mrs. R____ feels that we need to work with John in his problem areas, as well as to just give him his head, so to speak.

Teacher Dialogues

The following dialogues were obtained by personal interview, structured so the teachers were asked to respond in whatever manner they desired to these general questions:

1. Tell me about your experiences with John–areas of strength, problem areas, peer relations, etc.
2. How do you view the school's responsibility for providing for children like John?
3. Any comments on your grouping procedures, etc.

Mrs. F____, teacher–7th grade, English/Social Studies

Mrs. F____ observed that one of John's big problems when he entered her class was that of organization–forgot to bring notebook, materials for writing, books, etc. His attitude seemed to be "I don't need to be bothered if I don't want to." He evidenced an immature, little boy behavior which was quite often disruptive to other students. John liked to play the game of needling or putting down the teacher by placing her in a competitive position.

Mrs. F____ had many individual conferences with John on how to use his intelligence in a constructive rather than a destructive way, to which he responded well because "he could see the logic of it." (John's response) His attitude changed markedly during the second semester after several of these talks.

Mrs. F____ felt that her own effort to respect and give support to John's better questions, as well as to cut off the silly ones, seemed to help the class gain respect for him as an intellectual leader. She felt that a factor which may have contributed to John's initial problems could have been the status and social pressures placed on him by being selected as one of two 7th graders for the 8th grade algebra class, that he and the other boy became an isolation group of two special people. The other boy was eventually transferred at the request of the parent, and Mrs. R____ felt that this move helped John.

She found that she had to work with John constantly on bringing his materials to class and on turning in his work on time. She gave him many open-end assignments allowing him to choose his own topics for reports and encouraged his divergent thinking. She also found that it was necessary to provide John with a basic structure as a starting point, but that the more freedom the better as to the development of the report.

John began to take pride in his work and would often come in after school to show her. She found that it wasn't necessary to check on his progress in class so often.

Some techniques which Mrs. F____ thinks important in dealing with John and other gifted children are:

1. Make demands with a sense of humor
2. Let students know that you mean business in that which is demanded
3. They need a balance of structure and freedom
4. They need a sounding board for their own thoughts—hence much time spent in student-teacher discussion.

Mrs. F____ feels that in John's case it was important to encourage him to search out sources of fact instead of talking from the top of his head, that finding fault was not enough without a balance of constructive thinking. She describes this as "intellectual discipline." She also feels that John goes through an individual testing period immediately with each new teacher in order to determine whether or not they are worthwhile. Mrs. F____ feels that John's success in her class was due partly to his discovery of poetry and creative writing which allowed him to test his own thoughts, ideas, and philosophy.

Mr. S____, Teacher—8th grade, Science

Mr. S____ sees John's strength in his intellectual capacity and reasoning powers. He found that John would only do the work that interested him the most, and that he found very little of that. John would become a discipline problem when not interested, and would display very immature behavior—petty remarks, poking others, etc.

Mr. S____ relates that he attempted to spark some interest in John by allowing him to go ahead on his own, but that John very seldom, if ever, would follow through.

John did not try putting down Mr. S____, but evidenced his displeasure in other trivial behavior. In Mr. S____'s opinion, John was unable to produce a project which showed the boy's ability.

Mr. S____ feels that John needs time to have his "body catch up with his mind." He feels that John has intellectual power, but that he lacks drive and follow-through. He wonders whether science is John's interest field.

Mr. H____, Principal

Mr. H____ has known John for several years, first as a student in his Sunday school class, then as a student in elementary school.

He describes John as a boy having a very mature, questioning, interested mind which offers unusual insights, constantly spinning off from one idea to another.

Mr. H____ sees John's success in school, or lack of success, as dependent upon the teachers he has come in contact with. "The structure has not been important, but the people have." He feels that the teacher must be secure about his or her approach, must not see John as a challenge to authority, must work not from a permissive or authoritarian base, but through getting involved with him. He agrees that John can sometimes be quite intimidating to the teacher.

Mr. H____ feels that John has been a success in classrooms where teachers have modified their approach to John by not holding him to all the standards imposed on other students. This prompted him to ask the question: "Just how much should John be expected to conform for his own good, so that he can work successfully in the society in which he will travel? What are the minimal standards?"

To the reader: Now carefully consider the questions on page 29.

(The summaries of the three following students are given in capsule form. If they were developed to the length of the study about John, time, space, and reader patience would become problems. They are, however, useful in considering the three questions on page 29. Background material for Jane and Warren is by courtesy of Leah Webber, now Consultant for the Gifted, Saddleback Unified School District, California; editorial license that of the present writer.)

Mini-Study: Jane

Jane is a rather remarkable 10½-year-old girl in the fifth grade. She is impeccable in dress, manners, and appearance at all times. She seems to be extremely well adjusted to the fact of her giftedness and knows her own mind to the extent that she is not influenced by her peers. As an example, whenever class officers are nominated, she is among those chosen, but declines. I have discussed this with her and even though she realizes the desire of the class, she feels that she already has enough activities and doesn't wish to accept the responsibility. As I have mentioned previously, she is quite popular and is able to communicate successfully even when discussing on very high levels. I feel that strong admiration exists in the feelings of the class toward this girl who is able to comprehend and explain subjects which confuse them.

Her abilities are strong in every area, as shown by her quick ability to analyze situations and assignments objectively and to carry them out efficiently. Her level of perfection is such that she always pursues a subject beyond the limits of class time and requirement, and her best characteristic is that she truly appears to contemplate each subject of class discussion.

Jane's principle areas of interest lie in the science, music, and literary fields, although she shows high interest in everything. She is especially fascinated by the subject of celestial mechanics. In the literary field, she writes long and complex stories using imagination and showing cleverness, especially in her choice of introductions and conclusions. Jane also has a tremendous gift in the musical area. She has been playing for only three years and yet performs with poise as an accomplished pianist. Her unchanging drive is shown by her three-to four-hour-long practices each evening and two-hour lessons twice a week, taken 40 miles from her home. Her other hobby, if the piano may be labeled a hobby, is the raising of carnivorous plants.

She certainly is a sensitive, diverse child with wide interests, abilities, and needs.

To the reader: Now go back to the questions on page 29 and consider them carefully.

Mini-Study: Warren

Warren is an example of the underachieving gifted boy. He is eight years old, of average height, slightly "pudgy" in build. He has had some physical problems such as eye surgery three times, therapy for flat feet, a left-handedness which causes slower writing, and many visits to doctors for various "illnesses" brought on by a rather hypochrondriacal mother. His coordination and physical ability do not meet his expectations nor the norm for the class. His father is quite critical of him and his work, and does not have a high estimation of his son, a fact which I feel has been communicated in various ways to his offspring. This factor of a tenacious, hypercritical father and an over-concerned mother have served to mold Warren into a person who has complete lack of self confidence and a very poor self concept.

Warren registered 135 on the Binet; however, I feel that the extenuating psychological factors must have influenced this score to an extent. His ability to reason, his vocabulary, and critical thinking power seem to be higher. When one has rapport with Warren, one can find out much in discussion with him. However, it is difficult for him to force himself to write any information on paper. He seems to feel that it is better not to answer at all if one is not 99 percent sure of being correct. To give a "wrong" answer to him is a horrendous thing. This certainly leads to problems in a classroom when much work must be of the written type. Encouragement and vast amounts of praise have helped in this situation somewhat.

Warren's main interest and hobbies are making models and reading. He likes to work with drawing, painting, and other art processes. He excels primarily in gathering vast amounts of information and insights from his reading.

Warren is not particularly popular or unpopular in class; some of the children become disgusted with his slow, methodical, never-able-to-finish-an-assignment-or-find-a-paper personality, but usually he is left alone to his own devices. Most of the children seem not to care one way or the other about him.

In summary, Warren seems to have great potential that is being stifled by an emotional-psychological problem.

To the reader: Remeber to work with the questions on page 29.

Mini-Study: Angela

Angela is a high school sophomore of mixed parentage. Her father, who was black, came from British Honduras, her mother has Mexican and Irish-American parents. Because the father was killed in a construction accident when she was seven, her mother has had to work in a variety of jobs to provide food and a place to live for Angela and her four younger brothers and sisters.

The jobs, housecleaning and short-order cooking in a neighborhood cafe, have given her little beyond the basic necessities which are minimal at best. Recreational opportunities are non-existent, except for a small black and white TV of unpredictable reliability. A visit showed that the home was meagerly furnished, with no books or other reading materials visible. The mother tells Angela often that she can't wait for her to get some training so she can get a job when she finishes high school and help the family.

Angela is a fairly attractive girl who keeps herself neat and clean despite the lack of a family washing machine. She has very few clothes, and this, along with the lack of money, may be the reason she avoids special school activities, such as dances and other evening events.

The attention of the homeroom teacher was first drawn to her by the group test results which gave her an IQ of 125, despite her mediocre academic record. The teacher was able to persuade the psychologist to give her an individual test, which ranked her at 137 V and 133 P.

The teacher made it a point to become acquainted with Angela and found her to be a shy, introverted person who felt she wasn't much good. She dreaded the thought of spending her life as a typist or office girl, but saw little change to do otherwise. When asked if she would like to go to school if she had the money, she said somewhat bitterly, "What's the use of wishing? I could never get the money, and I'm too dumb anyway."

To the question, what would you do if you had enough money to go? What would you like to be? Angela replied, "I'd like best to be a teacher. I've worked with my younger brothers and sisters, and they seem to like it when I do."

The teacher determined then to help her attain her wish.

To the reader: What problems does the teacher face?
What steps would you take toward a solution?
What other problems do racial minority pupils face?
How can you alleviate them?

CHAPTER IV: THE PROCESS AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

The transition from pupil study to curriculum application in the classroom is concurrent and cumulative rather than one discrete step, and then another. Involvement with the special needs and problems of the gifted occurs simultaneously with the realization that regular offerings are not the answer.

The sample case studies given in the last chapter are useful as "ice-breakers," especially to teachers who work together in initial phases of their association, and they are helpful in that they describe common qualities and problems of the gifted. Teachers who use them tend to relate to their own gifted pupils even before completion of the information folders.

Discussions about the sample studies produced a wide array of suggestions. The elementary teachers in one group came up with the following:

1. Allow the child to work in areas of his own interests, and give him *any amount of time* and freedom needed to pursue them.
2. Establishment of special goals with the child so that he might plan to pursue a topic in depth.
3. Permit latitude for self-management.
4. Accept the possibility of independent study projects at all grade levels.
5. Use any available external source to assist the child with necessary materials.
6. Emphasize opportunity for the child to use thought and generalization by asking broad questions.

Similarly, the secondary teachers began consideration of developments and changes desirable for the gifted. Among their suggestions:

1. Encouragement of high-level thinking and creativity.
2. Working with another teacher or two can create an unstructured environment in which the gifted can leave the classroom for individual research, study, or production.
3. Group seminar preparation outside of the classroom.
4. Access to varied media and materials for the student(s).

It was with their own pupils that detailed curriculum planning and arrangements for procedural changes began to take shape. At the elementary level, children wrote plays, editorials, fiction, and non-fiction. They planned editorial policy and produced a self-supporting newspaper through solicited advertising. Free time every

afternoon for various pursuits elicited from the gifted, well-illustrated, and remarkable presentations on many topics ranging from the Republic of China to Civil War battles and satellites.

In one rigidly departmentalized high school, two teachers with common responsibility for a group of gifted students arranged for back-to-back teaching, so that the available time could be used for independent work without the interference of bells and schedules. Another worked to reduce markedly the number of repetitive questions and the related quantity of writing and paper work demanded, with reported good results. Initial productions were not visible immediately, since the secondary students were in some instances preparing for lengthy involvement in certain areas.

It is when teachers reach the stages described on these two pages that they will wish to re-examine the ***Rating Scale of Significant Behaviors in Teachers of the Gifted***, (page 20), for the purpose of examining anew those behaviors found best for teaching this population. They may wish to identify several on which they plan to concentrate initially, in order to improve their teaching. The selective approach is advocated so that teachers do not expect instant perfection of themselves.

Teachers also will want to give thoughtful consideration to two major elements within the classroom environment. These are the relationship of the classroom climate to creativity and the enhancement of creativity, and the basic relationship of the teacher to the gifted pupil.

Those who use the scale will be interested to know that factor analysis identified four factors: **(1) Individualized Materials and Instruction, (2) The Art of Questioning, (3) The Encouragement of Higher Level Learning, and (4) Communication-Interaction***. Of these four, the greatest number of items dealt with the third. The encouragement of learning opportunities which are in harmony with the student's needs and interests, and higher level learning cuts across all areas of creative and other learning endeavors.

It is the writer's belief that true creativity develops through opportunity, example, and encouragement. It cannot occur through scheduled sessions, teacher request for performance, or "creativity" exercises. Creativity is a personal, private matter which requires allowance for time, free experimentation, use of the imagination, and production without interruption by schedule demands. It requires the proper climate. It requires, as well, the teacher who by example and demonstration of personal interest shows that creativity is valued personally. Students should have frequent exposure to wide experiences and to opportunities to pursue creative endeavors. They also need contact with inanimate and human resources which will enable them to learn.

The basic relationship of teacher to pupil should be that of friend—an older person who aides and challenges the student in his pursuit of learning. It is necessary to constantly evaluate the

*Those interested in the fuller statistical treatment, research approach, or study elements not in this publication should read Item 18 in the bibliography, available on microfiche through ERIC Clearinghouse, Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia 22091.

actual need of the pupil for certain curriculum content, or for standard procedures, and cast aside the irrelevant. The very process of teaching itself must be appropriate for the student in question. Since even very young gifted children are capable of independent work, the teacher also should continuously assess his or her role, as opposed to the role required of a teacher who is working with less able or handicapped students. This does not mean abdication—far from it!

Higher-Level Classroom Operation

To promote increased ability to question effectively and, thus, encourage higher levels of learning, the teacher is encouraged to obtain copies, if possible, of Bloom's ***Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*** and Sanders' ***Classroom Questions***. Both are paperbacks, and both are listed in the bibliography as Items 3 and 22. The teacher may wish to consult additional taxonomies, such as that of Guilford, but Bloom's with Sanders' derivations is used here because it seems to be an excellent basis, direct and highly relevant. Teachers who adopt higher order operations find that they encompass many of the operations detailed in more intricate taxonomies. Sanders' little volume is recommended because it is filled with specific illustrations which will enlarge the understanding of Bloom's volume for many, and which may trigger ideas for use in one's own classroom. An added volume of specific suggestions of values is William K. Durr's ***The Gifted Student***[5].

Added study of higher-level classroom operation includes discussion, if possible, and evaluation of the teacher model, ***Focus on the Gifted, Teacher Activities and Behaviors*** (page 50), ***Group Discussion Suggestions*** (page 52), and ***Criteria for Curriculum Development*** (page 52). They all stress these principles:

1. **Open-ended questions which ask the student to compare, contrast, discuss, evaluate, apply, and generalize**
2. **Consideration of the interests of the pupils and choice of materials, which challenge the students to explore concepts in depth**
3. **Discussion, debate, and controversy, open-ended and non-structured, to stimulate divergent thinking**
4. **Independent study, the use of varied resources external to the classroom, and time for self-initiated study to foster higher intellectual development**

It is soon after some initial changes in the teaching process that the teacher will want to make another audiotape for comparison purposes. The evaluation of oneself should be based on improvement according to these criteria:

Teacher mode of questioning – positive or negative

Kind of response produced by teacher question – closed or open

Quality of response produced by teacher question

Relevance of teacher comments

Ratio of student verbal output to that of teacher

If a portable videotape is available, and the teacher can make private use of it, the experience of videotaping is invaluable. Privacy

may be insured by having a student run the machine. The teacher should have custody of the tape. This process has an advantage over the audiotape in that one is able to see mannerisms, facial expressions, and other behaviors which have a marked impact on student responsiveness. The choice on when to use the tape, or whether to use it at all should rest wholly with the teacher, and the event to be taped should be carefully planned in accordance with the principles which have been presented.

The videotape need not be an experience which the novice faces with dread. One teacher who made excellent tapes did so because the writer stressed with her that the best examples were those which involved a mininum of direct teacher output, and that the quality of the teaching would be seen in the very apparent pre-planning and preparation, and by the students themselves for the discussion and/or presentation at hand.

If members of a small group make tapes for possible showing to their group co-workers as an inservice exchange, as has been done, the advantages rest in self-evaluation, evaluation by non-threatening, sympathetic colleagues, the opportunity for each person to view several other productions, and the process-curriculum learnings which accrue to all.

Free time and opportunity for classroom visitations among the members of a group would produce similar results. These are dependent on available funds, available substitute teachers, and system approval, however. (See Figure 3 on next page)

FOCUS ON THE GIFTED IN VERBAL FORM

MEANINGFUL LEARNING FOR THE GIFTED

1. Children have ready access to library and other resource materials.
2. Students are involved in independent study activities. The teacher does not dominate the classroon and does not run the class as a "tight ship" but permits the student to have freedom in selecting and pursuing problems and in creating.
3. Major emphasis is given ideas of merit and the enhancement of these ideas.
4. The teacher's questions are open-ended, with an emphasis on generalization, analysis, and synthesis.
5. The interests and abilities of the students are utilized in planning and implementation of curriculum materials.
6. Discussion, utilizing debate and controversial issues, is freely used in the classroom.
7. Appropriately advanced content is available to the students so that there can be exploration in depth.

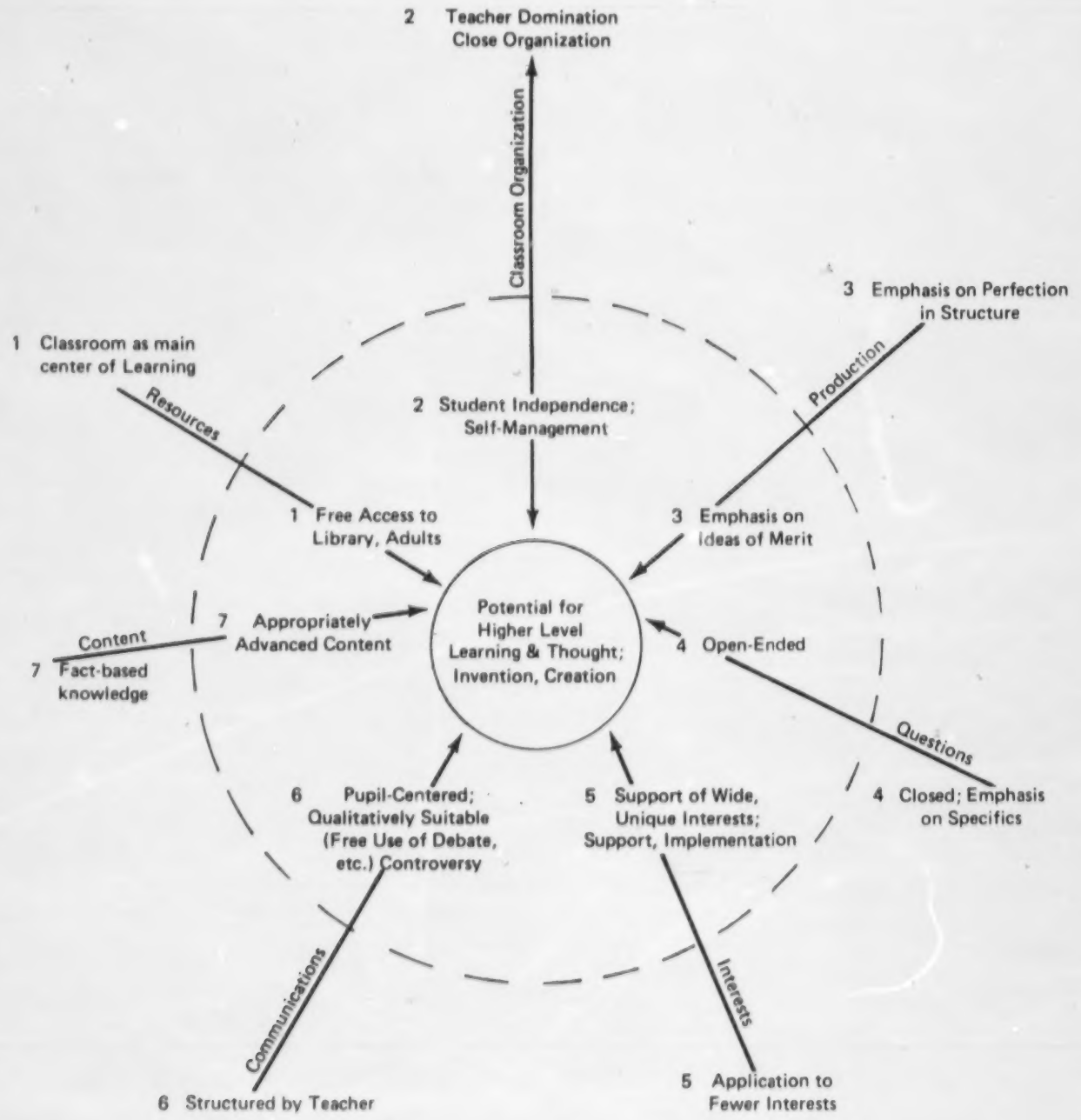
LESS MEANINGFUL LEARNING FOR THE GIFTED

1. Teacher and materials in the classroom are the main sources of information. Children do not have the freedom to utilize library resource people.
2. Class is run as a "tight ship." The topics and activities are prescribed for the students and there is very little deviation from the routine.
3. The major emphasis in production is in correct usage, neat papers, proper spacing and punctuation, etc., rather than on concepts and ideas of merit.
4. The teacher's questions are primarily closed-type questions with an emphasis on specific facts and rote memory.
5. The course of study is followed very closely, with little attention being paid to the interests of the children.
6. The lessons are carefully structured and there is little room for debate and controversy.
7. The content is based on specific facts and there are very few opportunities for exploration in depth or going beyond the grade level material.

Figure 3

FOCUS ON THE GIFTED
TEACHER ACTIVITIES AND BEHAVIORS*

Meaningful (inner circle), and **Less Meaningful** (outer circle)



*Preliminary reactions to this by principals were helpful. This occurred in inservice sessions conducted by the writer.

GROUP DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. Start with a provocative question. (Use broad questions and use them sparingly.)
2. Avoid teacher interjections. Try to avoid teacher to student, teacher to student (etc.) progressions. Notice the amount of teacher-student interchange.
3. Introduce opportunities for controversy and debate.
4. Provide opportunities for discussion.
5. Attempt to get more direct student response and less reliance on teacher guidance when having a discussion.
6. Avoid small teacher lectures that are not relevant to the discussion.
7. Try to use a question rather than a statement in group discussion.
8. Try interludes of silence when appropriate. Silence may promote thought.
9. Be aware of the types of teacher comments which facilitate or hinder expression. (Are you sure? Oh, come now! The habitual *OK* or *all right*. Do you agree? etc.)
10. Assess the quality or level of response you evoke through openers, as:

Opener	Response
Who	Factual
What	Factual
Where	Factual
Why	Analytical
Compare	Analytical
Contrast	Analytical
Discuss	Application, generalization

CRITERIA FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The content and ideas with which gifted students work can be exciting and challenging to them if certain criteria are used in planning. The teacher who provides opportunities for gifted students to use their abilities in satisfying fashion, in turn derives more satisfaction from the teaching process himself. Gifted students do not need the close supervision or detailed attention required by other groups. The following brief pointers may serve as a frame of reference in working on curriculum content of value for the gifted.

Curriculum for the gifted should provide opportunity for:

1. Study of major issues
2. Study of major ideas
3. Independent study
4. Time to study and research in depth
5. Generalization and application of information and ideas
6. Controversy and challenge
7. Development of *new* and original ideas, and time for self-initiated activities
8. Use of varied resources, external to the classroom
9. Use of *student* interests
10. Emphasis on analysis and critical thinking
11. Use of *pupil* initiative and leadership
12. Large blocks of free time for pupil study
13. Materials at appropriately challenging difficulty levels
14. Materials at appropriate ideational level
15. Use of only *broad* frames of reference, with relatively few major questions as the curriculum framework
16. Use of *legitimate learning* content in *all* fields, including the arts

Changes and Outcomes: Elementary Level

Through the application of the principles outlined and through planning, teachers have found that broader time spans and more challenging motivation resulted. One second grade teacher found that her gifted children were extremely enthusiastic about biographies. As she put it:

> "I have introduced this as part of their reading program when they are ready for more difficult reading material. Reading biographical material extends their horizons in the areas of place and time, and gives them many vicarious experiences which are valuable for these children, with their sensitivities and social awareness."
>
> Titles in the *Discovery Books* (published by Garrard)* series I have used are these:
>
> Jane Addams
> John James Audubon
> Clara Barton
> Luther Burbank
> George Washington Carver
> Ben Franklin
> U. S. Grant
> Sam Houston
> John F. Kennedy
> Francis Scott Key
> Abraham Lincoln
> Dolly Madison
> Florence Nightingale
> George Washington
> Booker T. Washington
>
> There are other books that are suitable, and artists and musicians should be included.

The task: Read several of these biographies to discover how the persons are alike, and how different. Why are they great?

In a study of food and the impact of insects, with rich reading materials gathered by the teacher and other adult, there is no need for elaborate work sheets or detailed questions if a few intriguing questions such as these are posed:

> If there were no insects in the world, what would be different?
>
> How are insects like people?
>
> What are some of the relationships between farmers and insects?

At the sixth grade level, Lazaro Cardenas, one of Mexico's greatest leaders, is barely mentioned in texts. The teacher remedied this by providing the gifted with a group of resource books which enabled them to delve into Cardenas' effect on present-day Mexico; comparison to Zapata, Juarez, and other leaders of Mexico; comparison of Cardenas and Franklin D. Roosevelt; and creation of dramas, poems, and murals based on various aspects of Mexican life.

Topics which employ concepts and generalizations and their significance to the life of students are virtually limitless. At both elementary and secondary levels, these topics are suited to the gifted at their level:

---

*The books are not too difficult, yet introduce new ideas and new vocabulary.

Discussion of ethics
A debate on the causes of the Civil War
The exploration of probabilities
The humanistic aspects of African culture
Race relations
Multimedia interpretations of poetry

At the secondary level, these subjects might be explored in greater depth, although they are not necessarily beyond the elementary gifted:

Analysis of a piece of literature by a panel
Multimedia interpretations of modern poetry
A debate on the defense budget
Existentialism

Changes and Outcomes: Secondary Level

Consideration by teachers, either singly or in small groups, of desirable alterations in classroom and school procedures for gifted pupils will produce beneficial changes. Multiple texts are used instead of the single text, and student selection of cultural, economic, or political strands for concentrated study within a general topic becomes a practice.

Some teachers stress the use of a general topic, broad reading from many titles, including paperbacks and weekly seminar discussions on pros and cons related to the area under investigation. For example, studies then occur of other countries and their forms of government. Papers can be written as analyses of political philosophy and their implications. Documentation and footnoting of ideas may be required, but examinations dealing with ideas and broad essay questions are preferred to objective-type items.

One of the impediments to free performance was eradicated early by some secondary teachers, namely that of imposed arbitrary letter-grade systems. The teachers agreed that grades should not be emphasized, but that students should be free to perform in accordance with their individual interest, in depth. In order to free students from anxiety, the teachers either used *A* grades, or *A* and *B* grades, if grades were necessary. They noted that despite the lack of grades as motivators, the students kept notebooks up to date, devoted great amounts of time to projects, did excellent work, and raised provocative, highly advanced questions in their contacts with outside resource persons.

This is a description by one teacher:

World Geography

This lesson is essentially the culmination of approximately two and one half weeks of work in the area of economic or industrial geography. The students have been working on this problem outside of class for three days. They had no restrictions regarding their sources of information, and I have no idea what their answers are going to be. It should be interesting to see not only what country each student chooses, but why. The object is not only one of economics, but also to bring the students closer to an understanding of the many ways that nations may differ from each other.

Open book problem
Use any books, magazines, maps, or graphs that may be necessary.

Problem: You are a Swiss manufacturer producing inexpensive ($25 to $40) and medium-priced ($100 or more) watches. Due to import duties placed on your product by foreign governments, you have decided that you would like to open up a new factory in some foreign country. For a variety of reasons, you have narrowed your choice to five countries—the U.S.A., India, Brazil, Israel, Republic of South Africa.

1. List the many factors (both natural and human resources and other problems) that you must investigate before you decide where to build your factory.
2. What advantages would there be for your company in the country of your choice?
3. What disadvantages or problems would you think that you would find in the country of your choice?
4. What advantages would there be for your company if you decided to locate in the other countries listed?
5. What disadvantages would there be in the other countries listed for your company?
6. Which country have you chosen in which to locate?
7. Where in the country chosen will you locate? Why?
8. Would your overall decision regarding selection of the country have been the same for the following industries:?

INDUSTRY	ANSWER	WHY	CHOICE
A. Steel			
B. Winemaking			
C. Textiles			
D. Perfume			
E. Chemicals			
F. Toys			
G. 25-Foot Sailboats			

In a chemistry class, students participated in special topical investigations, chosen independently. The students formulated a problem and presented the problem and their own conclusions to the class when they were ready. They were given released time for performing experiments and research and used their outside time as available, with free access to laboratory facilities and to the teacher. Because of the stress on independent study, with open opportunity for personal ideas, experimentation in various subject fields, and opportunity for personal choice, the students maintained their own high standards. The teachers encouraged student ideas and varied interests, ranging from electronics experiments to oceanography.

Teachers in English and Social Studies stressed individual research projects, the use of work centers, free time in library research, and spaced formal class sessions, rather than daily sessions.

The importance of total school involvement was emphasized in a plan initiated by one school for a series of lectures entitled, "Adventures in Intellect." The teachers volunteered to give talks or to conduct a discussion. The topics, ranging from dramatic readings on "Don Juan in Hell," to "Existentalism," "Vietnam," "Protest in Perspective," "Art," "Cinema I," "Evolution of Anti-hero," "Black Humor," and "Pessimists Learn Chinese." were very well attended by the students and provide a background for continuing interest in the part of some.

The problem of generating enthusiasm in secondary students for some areas of the arts is well known, especially when the area has not been within the previous experience of the young person. One high school teacher solved this problem in her English honors class by involving the students in videotaping a presentation of their interpretation of e. e. cummings through the simultaneous use of accompanying collages, recordings, and their own interpretative readings.

The list could go on without end. The examples which follow are done by the students themselves.

The January Series and Other Poems

THE JANUARY SERIES

A collection of twenty poems and assorted tales and comments, all written between the dates January 3 and February 3 by Bruce ____. The following poems and commentaries are illustrative of the multi-faceted psychological and intellectual nature of one high school student. His poems and essays were published in a 49-page booklet, with elaborate sketches by a classmate and close friend. These are examples:

This collection is dedicated to
My Friends
with the following words:
"If at verse you don't succeed,
try, try again."

Brown Sugar

Too many roaches in my loaf of bread;
The hound's got too many fleas;
There's too many bills on my chest of drawers;
I got too much of doin' as you please;

Too many ants down on the kitchen floor;
Too many kids in the street;
Too many threats to my security;
Too many words on this sheet.

I can kill off them roaches in my breadbox;
Soak that hound in kerosene;
Pay off them bills and get a job, maybe;
Start a little sayin' what I mean;

Swab down the ants in the kitchen;
Stick the sprinkler in the street;
Start threatenin' everybody's security;
And. .ah. .Oh, yes!

I am beginning to think that putting the explanation of these poems below them on the same page could be a serious mistake. I guess, though, if you, the reader, paid any attention to the Introduction, these explanations aren't such a bad idea after all.

"Brown Sugar" was written with no particular resident of Watts in mind, and was titled "Brown Sugar" because of a sign on my bedroom wall which proclaims BROWN SUGAR. It could make an interesting folk song or ballad.

The punch-line ending is used here for the first time in the January Series, although it will crop up several more times in the collection.

Druthers

A doe in the meadow chews grass with her fawn,
(The clouds are all laundered and white,)
They look like two statues on somebody's lawn.
(The dew glistens wet in new light.)

A grasshopper sits on the top of a hill,
(The flowers are lovely today,)
A-munchin' on grass shoots 'til he's had his fill.
(And love seems to float time away.)

A robin sings lively in the tree tops up high,
(The pines seem to sigh in the breeze,)
His red breast is throbbin' as closer he flies.
(The world is at rest, at its ease.)

An inch-worm comes near me, he can't seem to fear me;
I pick myself up from the grass.
(With sunshine and live things, I'd sit out behind things
Just watching the seasons go past.)

Walk down to the river bank just south of the Madison Junction Campground in Yellowstone National Park in the early morning during the summer; read the above poem; then decide whether or not I could be talking about any other place.

Invictus

–William Ernest Henley

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced or cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find me, unafraid.

It matters not how straight the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul.

Hat

Girls are
a
pleasure to
behold
ing

I couldn't resist the following pun on one of my favorite poems. The idea seized me as I was walking home one afternoon, and by the time I walked in the door, the poem had only to be written down.

This is not a true parody in the Carrollian sense of the word.

Invictus ab Shoesalesman

Forty years I've worked and scrimped
And saved; I've groveled on the rug
To fit a stocky matron's foot
Into a slipper much too snug
For any but her darling babes
To wear. Full forty years I worked
And now, at last, my time has come.
The wish that all those years had lurked
Within my heart is mine: I am the Manager.
Rewarded for my humble role,
I am the master of my feet,
I am the captain of my soles.

In Winter Time

In winter time, in dreary days,
When thunder dulls the skies,
When kernels in the earth below
Await the time to rise,
When men retire within their homes
Away from falling rain,
The world has purred itself to sleep,
To rest, and wake again.

The Mirror of the Mind

Resting here, in deepest thought,
I find myself reflecting on reflections.
Oh, yes, they're quite well known to me,
I see every corner of every room they show;
And yet, I wonder.

What causes a reflection? Something shiny surely;
Something bright and polished makes a reflection.
I've seen metal's cold and brooding images,
And glass' crystal truths, of course;
I've also seen the kindly flattery
Which pools of water show.

But what is a reflection? It must be something.
Something which makes the mind perceive
A world which is not there, an image of a world
Which stands with reality in another place.

And is that other place beside me in this room,
Or is it deep within an author's thoughts,
Reflected in his writing?

On this note the January Series ends.

The following are two examples of high school poetry by gifted students.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN. . .

–by Kendra____

While one child searches savagely
for a meager bite of bread
Another wants a piece of cake
as soon as he's been fed.
A young boy prays to win first place
possess a gold award.
Another runs a race of death
and grasps a gun or sword.
A pretty girl glares in the mirror
and loathes her twice-worn dress.
Another needs a simple shawl,
her bluish limbs confess.
How can the world, divided so,
continue 'round the sun?
As one youth wades in poverty
another seeks his fun.
Is there anyone who sees it all,
the laughing eyes, the empty stares?
I wonder for which He mostly cares, if He loves them both;
If He's with a starving woman
as she grinds rice on a stone
Does He have the time to watch a play
or save a broken home?

A SHOREBIRD'S THOUGHTS

–by Luita____

The sea is my mind
With it I do as I please.
When I am angry
It becomes a mad
Swirling
Mass of charging fury and foam
Spitting revenge at an insane world.
When I am disturbed
The sea becomes
Quiet,
Meditative,
As if gathering strength
For a soon-to-be battle.
When I am content
It playfully tosses
Pebbles
To its playmate
The shore,
And together they ponder
At what will be my next mood.

The Individual in Society

Students involved in the study of ***The Individual in Society***, in a back-to-back class used field trips, interviews, on-the-site study, and the resources of various libraries in order to develop answers to key questions, of which the following are samples, and to prepare committee reports and individual summary papers. The problem was approached through depth study by specialist student groups. The topics studied included architecture, art, ethnic, folk song, jazz, language, mass media, men and machines, and values. Guide sheets prepared by the two teachers dealt with topics in such a manner that the study subjects were interrelated, and thus the whole class was concerned with the investigation of all of the topics in some respect. Through questions such as those which follow, the students produced outstanding summaries of their learnings. The paper following the sample questions is a greatly condensed example of the student products.

Do our moral values affect our tastes in art and architecture? Why?

How do the things which Chinese, Mexican, and Japanese people value differ from ours?

How have these and other groups affected American folk singing?

How is language an isolating factor in the separate ethnic communities?

Would problems which exist because of language difference disappear if there were no language barrier?

Attempt to discuss your emotions and feelings on seeing a certain picture of a particular building. Is it easy or difficult?

The Individual in Society

--term report by Paul____

Every individual has a place to fill in the world, and is important in some respect, whether he choses to be so or not.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, individual

I wish to dedicate this effort to the ____ High School Back-to-Back Class, and moreover, to the institution of team teaching; may it continue as a citadel of progressive education and reach the great heights for it envisoned by this consecrator.

Introduction

Man, the two-legged creature that walks the earth, is indeed a strange inhabitant of this or any other planet. Binomial nomenclature describes this peculiar air-breather as homo sapiens, a Latin cognomen for intelligent man. Linnaeus, the deviser of this system of biological classification seems to have hit the proverbial nail on the head. For he recognized that this certain species, unlike the others, has a brain of sufficient sophistication so as to utilize that essential in homo intelligens, thought.

Freud tells us that homo intelligens, in the possession of such a brain, displays certain psychiatric configurations in the day-to-day utilization of said brain. Others tell us some who claim membership in the species make no use of this tool. Still others warn us of such evils in homo intelligens makeup as greed, lust, complacency, prejudice, bellicosity, etc. And then there is Dame ____, overseer of ____ Back-to-Back Class, who, like the soothsayer, warns us of man's fatal flaws:

CONFORMITY!	Heavens!
CRITICISM!	Mercy!
PROGRESSIVISM!	%$@&)*!

The author, in his notoriously prosaic style, will deal chiefly with the later caveat in his term report. A wise man once said: "Tell 'em what you're going to tell 'em, tell them what you've told them, and then tell them again." The author is going to now tell you; homo intelligens shall be twisted, turned, scrutinized, magnified, and albeit the author frowns on such practices, generalized.

The author could quite easily begin this paper with Noah Webster's definitions of conformity, criticism, and progressivism, yet he chose not to. If homo intelligens does indeed display these idiosyncracies and others left unmentioned, then can it be correct to substitute the efficacy of definition for the completeness of the use and even the cause of such behavioral traits? To this the author replies in the negative, and instead of expedient jargon shall produce relationships, truisms, and motivations.

These traits are certainly not chronic, as is a deformity, but rather is acquired from the environment. Yet they are as common as those who possess them; for they indeed represent a tangible part of man's existence. They control his ego, motivate him, mutate him, and affect his every thought. These traits described earlier are not as inanimate as their word representaions might appear, yet homo intelligens can mask them at will, as he masks the words which represent them. Man himself has shown them to be embedded deep within his awareness.

But man, it seems, is a considerate one, for he provides us with crystal clear evidence of these traits. Even if we cannot cure them, we can readily observe them and describe them to the peruser of this manuscript. Homo intelligens, the exhibitionist he is, challenges even the most casual of observers to exist unaware of these traits. He does so by means of:

Folk Songs	Ethnic Groupings
Values	Art
Architecture	Men and Machines
Language	Jazz
Mass Media	

(The two following examples are illustrative of the nine essays which appear in the body of the paper:)

Folk Songs

The folk song, as we know it, expresses and interprets the national growth of our nation. But more importantly, it expresses the feelings and emotions of the everyday man and acts as a medium of such expression.

Few folk songs tackle purely political problems. The great majority attain a certain satirical impact upon the listener. In American Folk Song's humble beginnings, these tunes were merely secular hymns written with religious texts. An example of this is "Virgin Mary." But even in these early days, man's critical nature is illustrated in satires such as "Good Old Colony Days."

The American has sung folk songs for various reasons. Some were work songs which seemed to lessen the burden of their work. Yet the immigrants sang of their old country in minstrel type arrangements. Those who sang them were known as "shanty boys" from the French word meaning to sing.

The Western Migration marked a large upswing in folk songs. Those hardy pioneers were quite liberal in the content of their folk songs, indeed they were quite progressive in such works as "Banks of the Ohio." Folk songs during this period also acted in a commercial capacity, as unfortunately folk songs must, when land promoters in the West "advertised" with such ballads as "Oleans," which told of the great beauty of the West.

Please note in the previous paragraph the word progressive was used for the first time in the body of this term paper. The author feels it is his responsibility to touch on this subject in a little more detail. The progressive tendency in the knowing man is that quality which makes him strive for, if you will, "the better mouse trap." Homo intelligens realizes the future must bring change, and in so doing reasons that this change need not be toward the more mediocre, much less remain the same, and at that point in his thought decides to better himself. Was it Victor Hugo who said, "Progress—the stride of God!"

The cowboy's folk songs were simple in design, for they acted only to lull the cattle, nervous from a long drive, to sleep. They usually told of the cowboy's lonesomeness as in what can be considered the national anthem of cowboys, "Home on the Range."

At this time, an art form in music emerged which was destined to change the entire face of folk singing; this form was called the ballad. These songs originated in the railroads where they were used as work songs. They told of such heroes as John Henry (in the ballad bearing the same name). Also popular at that time was "Mule Skinner Blues." Usually the ballads told of disreputable men, yet they always glorified them almost to the point of deifying them.

These folk songs were sung mainly at the folk singer's equivalent of a jam session—the hootenany. This entity is quite prevalent today in some night spots around the country. They usually occur in smoky second stories, inhabited by an assortment of guitar and banjo strumming folk singers. The audience merely sprawls on the floor in college sessions and burns logs at ski resorts where folk songs are offered. Another common name that has almost replaced the hootenany is the "coffee house." Young people inhabit these places which offer mocha coffee at anything around $.60 a cup.

During the early years of this country, man saw fit to place his fellow man in bondage. He made him toil at hard labor and saw to it that he have no family ties whatsoever. This evil was to be known as slavery. The Negro reverted to a medium most familiar to him in Africa, music. In such songs as "Elijah Rock," the Negro lashed back the only way he could at his master in spirited pieces as the above mentioned. Because of the hardships placed upon them, the Negro seized Christianity because of its promise for a better life in the future. In many of the negro spirituals, references are made to bibical characters and occurrences.

Many times the Negro spiritual acted as a medium for communication, for it was considered a crime for the Negro to learn how to read. Such songs told the way for escape for the promised land, the North. In such songs as "Follow the Drinking Gorge," the Negro

was told to follow the North Star and watch for tracks left by a one-legged man. Because the Negro slave thought himself the equal of his master and because of his longing for freedom, he was critical and progressive. (Criticism as an entity in this discussion, shall be dealt with in greater detail in upcoming sections.)

Today we are experiencing a revival of folk singing where the lyrics serve a different purpose. (The folk song always served a purpose.) Today's purpose is to criticize. Yet this ought not be shunned, it should be admired, for any free society must have dissent and, moreover, must tolerate and listen to it. Today the lyrics of many folk songs are questioned for their content, sometimes thought to be risque. The lyrics of Bob Dylan, in particular, are under heavy scrutiny. Everyone is looking for the hidden meanings behind songs. In that group of scrutinizers emerges two distinct factions, the "Cleans" and the "Dirties" if you will. The Dirties are contending that such songs as "Strangers in the Night" have homosexual references. They seem to delight in the decoding of implied sexual innuendoes. The rival group, the Cleans, merely maintain that lyrics should not be censored as they are part of the entire art form.

Architecture

"Architecture encloses space so that beauty and utility are one."

Whatever we are is reflected in the architecture of our time. One might say the buildings and edifications of man are the mirror image of homo intelligens. If this is so, then this field of art can certainly be used to prove the author's major premise; that is, that man is basically conforming, critical of himself and others, and progressive.

At this time the author would like to deal further with the term of conformity. Homo intelligens wakes up every morning and enters a society filled with other such men, each possessing the same basic anatomical features. Most of them talk alike, eat the same foods, and dress the same way. Thought, unlike the others being intangible, is often found to align itself with the aforementioned entities. None are unapart from their environs, and are dealt with as such and under those conditions.

Whenever one studies the field of architecture, he must realize that words and photographs give very little justice to the total art form concerned. For the quality of space and spirit can be fairly examined only at the structural reality. The written word and the drawing are ludicrous expressional media; the only proper one is the building itself.

As in any art field, there are the traditionalists. And certainly architecture had hers. American traditionalists are those who hand on or record a statement or belief from generation to generation. These men make strong statements about their beliefs. Some truly great American traditionalists are described below. *(descriptions omitted)*

Conclusion

The author has shown homo intelligens in nine different aspects of his existence. He has been shown to be basically conforming, critical of himself and others, and progressive.

His folk songs have been shown to have originated through his progressive wish to be set free from bondage and also because he felt critical of his slave owners. Since folk singing in itself is a group activity, it surely must be conforming.

Man's values were shown to be progressive for they must have a basis or foundation from which to start. And since they need such a basis, they must continually be changing. Values and morality are certainly conforming and critical of people, for they attempt to set down certain protocols by which people ought to model themselves.

Homo intelligens architecture, being in itself a medium for man's expression, must demonstrate these three idiosyncracies. If the architect is critical, conforming, progressive, then his buildings must be them, too.

Certainly it is intuitively obvious to even the most casual observer that man's language is in a continual state of flux, assimilating new words and meanings at fantastic rates, it must be progressive. If certain words in language or even their meanings are challenged by others as not being morally sound, then it must be said of it that it is critical. For without language, man would not be.

The mass media, it is said, are pushing us toward passivity and conformity. In exposing evil, it is critical not only of themselves but of others. And in that it strives for amelioration, it is surely progressive.

Men and machines have been demonstrated to be possibly the most progressive of them all. For machines, in trying to make work easier and faster, are aiming toward a world of more leisure time. This author feels that machines shall not eliminate jobs, but rather create more jobs and give homo intelligens more time to make something of himself.

How about art? Is there ever a more efficacious medium of expression than art? Is it certainly more eloquent than even the spoken word? Just as mass media has been shown to be an outlet for man's thought, and just as folk songs have and jazz shall be, art is congruent to this author's major premises.

Ethnic groupings are very important in the world of homo intelligens. For they demonstrate quite clearly man's attitudes toward other peoples.

William Shakespeare summed man up when he said, "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a god! The beauty of the world! The paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me; no, nor woman neither, though by you smiling, you seem to say so."

CHAPTER V: SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

At this point, teachers who are beset with day-to-day pressures and who perceive chiefly gradual rather than dramatic changes, may wonder whether marked extra effort on behalf of one student or just a fraction of the total population is worth it. It is! A teacher who makes a change for the better for just one gifted young person may affect the attitudes, mental health, and productivity of that individual far more than he knows. These youth are acutely aware of such efforts and speak with warm appreciation of the teacher(s) who made them. And this is what teaching should be about.

What Is at Stake?

The learning needs of the gifted differ from those of other children. The gifted as a group do not need the usual attention to basic skills. When half of them enter school with such skills and consistently deviate further and further from the norm if they are allowed to learn, concentration on the skills makes little sense. Even for the individuals who may require special remediation, the mode of teaching and the type and timing of contacts differ.

What they do need is the opportunity to learn at their own pace. They need opportunities to use and expand their skills in dealing with significant questions and issues, in experimentation and invention, in exploration of content and ideas completely foreign to the established curriculum, in creative production.

The independence, ability, interests, and initiative of the gifted should underscore the right of the gifted to play a major part in the determination of their own learning agenda. In learning from their own quest and search for resolution, they extend their knowledge, talents and skills, perceptiveness, and curiosity about the expanding environment. And even the skills, so important in the annual test summaries which are used to prove accountability, improve concurrently to the credit of the school system!

The interaction of the individual with various social groups is closely related to his self-esteem, his security in interpersonal contacts, and his opportunities to relate meaningfully to others with a minimum of frustration. The major social group of the child from age five or six, to sixteen or seventeen is the public school.

The school learning environment intertwines constantly with the psychological and social components of the individual, and plays a large part in determining his self-esteem, his feeling of harmony in meaningful interpersonal relationships, his respect for others and the respect of others for him, as well as his opportunities for self-fulfillment.

All persons go through developmental stages, from immediate to wider affiliation, and from the parent to the group. They develop an increasing length of affiliation, increasing discrimination and selectivity, increasingly meaningful contacts, close relationships, and the skills needed in interpersonal contacts. The gifted typically go through the stages earlier than their age mates. The task, then, becomes one of providing for unusually high levels of maturation.

As very young persons, the gifted display concerns far beyond their years. Problems of morality, religion, and world peace may be troublesone to school beginners. The interest in abstract ideas and the concern for social betterment and social justice frequently produce high interest in potential remedies to problems besetting society.

The concern of the gifted for social justice and their interest in social issues have deep implications for curriculum planning, and, indeed, if the gifted are freed to pursue problems which are relevant (though difficult) within their complete historical and social context, the span of human knowledge may be involved, rather than a single topic or subject.

The issue of the "well-rounded" student is discussed frequently among teachers and other adults and frequently becomes a reason for set course assignments. The courses, in turn, create real barriers to opportunities for young specialists and highly talented students to pursue in any meaningful sense the learnings that they should. Wide application of the rule means that many students look upon school as a dreary, repetitious endurance contest, to be faced so that one day they may escape. Literal application of the rule also means that the opportunities to develop talents vanish and at times do not exist at all. The adult who regards requirements as necessary to wide learning fails to recognize either the interrelatedness of fields of knowledge which a gifted young person may plumb in depth in pursuit of his specialty, or the fact that versatility of skills and accomplishments is typical of the gifted individual.

At stake, therefore, is not only the proper development of the gifted student, but also his psychological health, his attitudes toward self and society, and his will to learn.

The Teacher Meets The Need

Given the above, can the teacher meet the need? He or she can, in any type of school situation, if sufficiently open-minded to seek improvement. Our own experience proved that excellent teachers become better through using the processes described previously, and individual teachers improve markedly through the

self-study process. Many alternative processes are possible, of course. The one described was summarized because it has not only undergone the informal critical reactions of many teachers in inservice courses, but also has been subjected to rigorous evaluation.

The process is not complex. Essentially it consists of self-study and self-pacing.

By using certain study guides, readings, small group conferences, and observations and analysis of their own teaching, teachers can employ a basic set of principles as a framework for improvement in teaching with favorable results. The use of these materials and procedures, described throughout the chapters, results in highly significant improvement in teaching[18].

The frame of reference involves initial study and discussion of pupils, the anonymous pupils of other teachers first, and then their own. The study or discussion of pupils by teachers inevitably directs itself toward educational planning and the establishment of favorable learning conditions for pupils with exceptional or unusual learning needs.

The gifted are persons who require a curriculum based on major concepts, issues, ideas, and their special interests and talents; therefore, activities are best planned with the major topical approach as a principle criterion.

Similarily, the personal qualities and abilities of the gifted are used as a basis for curriculum planning. For example, such traits as the ability to assume early responsibility for their own learning, the liking for independence, the interest in pursuing ideas in depth, or the persistence and long-time range of interests suggests criteria to be employed in the planning of curriculum and in the planning of learning procedures appropriate for the gifted. The characteristics of the gifted are seen as especially harmonious with the level of performance implied by advanced levels of ability, and carry implications for the development of learning opportunities for them in all fields of human endeavor.

To emphasize the qualities needed by teachers, examination of the attributes of successful and less successful teachers is useful[18]. Visits were arranged by the teachers for rotating groups of three experts who visited at appointed times.

Comments on four representative teachers who were highly successful at self-improvement are typical of those made of the total group. Obviously, these teachers agreed to the prearranged evaluations because of their involvement in a research study. This would not be the case, normally. The visitations were made by rotating teams of experts, and no aspects of their reactions were conveyed to other school system personnel.

It is obvious, also, that these teachers were already good teachers, for the most part. This should not discourage the teacher who reads the evaluations; the point is that teachers *improve* through the self-study process, and do so to a highly significant degree, even if their initial performance is beyond the average.

Similarly, the lack of some of the equipment previously described should not cause hesitation. The participating school systems[18] varied widely in the ready availability of special equipment and materials, and are fairly representative of the typical range of state-supported schools. While circumstances may limit access, most teachers can use materials and equipment either through central offices at the city or county levels, or through contacts with local, county, and state libraries. Visitation evaluations from the study groups follow:

> A primary teacher was described as "having great potential, but tense during observation," and as "a strong teacher, but essentially traditional in her methods. . . A conformist herself, I doubt that she would even try to provide a stimulating environment for gifted youngsters." These were comments during her first two visits. On the third and final visit, these notes were made: "The quality of thinking in this class seemed uncommonly excellent. . . A bright class involved in discussion. Many original, creative, and analytic points brought up by students. Children free to explore own ideas."
>
> A middle-elementary teacher received these initial reactions: "Students read poetry with interjections by teacher. Essentially a class activity but one in which student interest was high. Emphasis seemed to be on work recognition." On the final visit: "This is a great *teacher*. Five different activities going on at once. Each one is different and exciting. Everyone is deeply involved in his activity. Use of audiovisual in original and multiple ways. A rare experience for children."
>
> At the junior high level, these remarks were made the first time: "Individual students working on research reports—good atmosphere. Equipment available and used by children. All working with high-level interest, purpose, and enthusiasm. Twenty-seven children, some in library, all working independently or in groups of two or three. No discussion period during observation." On the final visit: "She is truly a talented and gifted teacher. She has created a more stimulating environment for learning than I think I have ever observed. A creative teacher who allows students, successfully, to assume much responsibility for their learning."
>
> A high school teacher received these comments initially: "Lecture—purely—excellent content. Some attempt at illustration. . . This is a very well-prepared lecture to a large group of students. Many materials were used for emphasis, and the teacher had done much preparation and had a good background, but there was no participation by students, although they were invited." Later, these notations were made: "An outstanding creative teacher! Use of opaque projector to display student work illustrating Eliott's modern poetry. I thought this idea superb! Use of mood music from tape recorder. Terrific student response, participation, ideas, cooperation."

These remarks were made about the less-successful teachers:

> "Talks too much. Teacher directs everyone to think *her* way...My first impression was very positive, but after observing her a few minutes it was very apparent that this woman is a compulsive talker. She never stops long enough to give any child a chance to participate. Her objective...was to get the youngsters to write a letter, but it is also obvious that she wanted every child to write the same letter..."

After participation: ..."a methodical teacher, in control of the classroom at all times. The decisions are made by her, and the latitude determined by her. Creative opportunities are predetermined and closely planned in advance of the activity."

Another teacher:..."never makes a move or utters a sound without a purpose behind it...a performer...likes an audience and is getting something out of teaching for herself that very few teachers experience...uses the soft-voice technique very effectively."

Later: "Keeps close control. Uses near ridicule and sarcasm. Tight control of children for quiet and conformity, especially the boys... teacher doesn't really enjoy or like the children as they are."

Another: "...sharp tongue not responsive to children. Evidence of boredom. All teacher-drawn bulletin boards. Many cut-out patterns in evidence for kids to use. Seems to seek only one or two right answers...way-out answers are not pursued for the logic they might contain..."

Final evaluation- "Appears rigid—one-right-answer sort of person. Quite skillful at promoting discussion, but cannot resist imposing her own evaluation on almost everything that is said."

In summary, certain traits were specified again and again by the judges in their comments on the teachers who showed improvement during the project. The teachers were open, receptive, and interested in new ideas. They were willing to use new approaches to working with their pupils and to deal with them at appropriate ideational levels. They were willing to forego the closure resulting from complete pre-planning and structure for increasing involvement and responsibility of students. In the centering of responsibility with their pupils, they were secure themselves. All of them were interested in learning.

The teachers who did not improve also were described in similar terms, in several instances. Teacher determination, teacher direction, and teacher structure characterized many of their efforts. Less evidence appeared in the descriptions of interest in new approaches. More comment related to inflexibility and verbal domination of classroom procedures. In short, the teachers maintained practices which were comfortable for them, but which were not conductive to open learning opportunities for the gifted in their classrooms. The structure, especially where the gifted were placed in heterogeneous groups, precluded independent activity. The closure organization, while no doubt viewed as excellent by those who nominated the teachers for participation, limited the development of widely ranging, interesting learning opportunities for their pupils.

Though some teachers were less successful than others, even those showed improvement. For the total group, highly significant gains were made in the four factors identified on the Rating Scale: ***Individualized Materials and Instruction***, ***The Art of Questioning***, ***Encouragement of Higher Level Learning***, ***and Communication-Interaction***. The approach described is clearly productive of change for the better, therefore. All such change comes gradually.

The reward comes in helping a gifted young person develop wholesome attitudes and relationships within an environment which is responsive to his abilities. The conditions which enable him to respect himself and to relate to others constructively will in turn produce a better, more constructive member of society. In turn, the teacher becomes not only a positive model for young people, but a model for the profession in the best sense.

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A Guide Toward Better Teaching for the Gifted

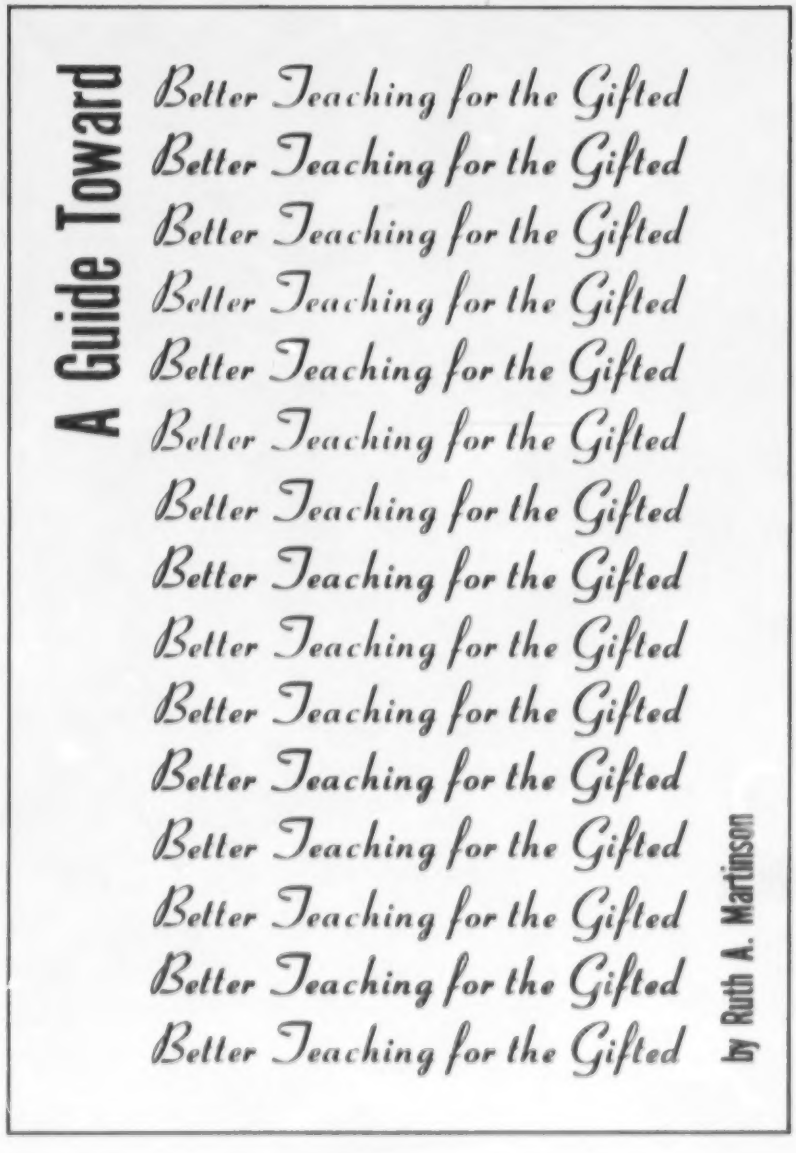
A new handbook, ***A Guide Toward Better Teaching for the Gifted***, has been written by Ruth A. Martinson, Professor Emeritus, California State College at Dominguez Hills, and a pioneer in gifted education.

"Careful study of this handbook, with reference to one's own teaching," the author said, "would increase greatly a teacher's satisfaction in working with the gifted. Burdens will be minimized and the teacher will improve significantly in teaching skills."

The publication can be used by an individual or small group of teachers. The 72-page book includes forms and scales which can be adapted to individual situations. Some chapter titles are "Need for Preparation," "Past and Present Efforts," "Curriculum Planning," "What Is at Stake?" and "The Teacher Meets the Need."

Martinson spent the major part of her career as professor of education and psychology at Long Beach (California) State College, and in planning and developing teacher education and graduate programs at California State College, Dominguez Hills.

The handbook is available on subscriber-discount with the form printed below. A new publication order form, listing all new publications is available from the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools Office.



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Send order and payment to:

Ventura County Superintendent of Schools
County Office Building
Ventura, CA 93001

Attention: Mary Jane Chapman

BOOKS AVAILABLE

from National/State Leadership Training Institute on the Gifted and the Talented
Ventura County Superintendent of Schools Office
County Office Building
Ventura, California 93001

- A Guidebook for Evaluating Programs for the Gifted and Talented
- A Guide Toward Better Teaching for the Gifted
- A Handbook for Parents of Gifted and Talented
- A New Generation of Leadership: Education for the Gifted in Leadership
- Developing a Written Plan for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students
- Everyday Enrichment for Gifted Children at Home and School
- Ideas for Urban/Rural Gifted/Talented: Case Histories and Program Plans
- New Directions for Gifted Education
- PAB (Parent-Administration-Board Member) Conference Report and Follow-Up
- Parentspeak on Gifted and Talented Children
- Promising Practices: Teaching the Disadvantaged Gifted
- Providing Programs for the Gifted and Talented
- Self-Directed Study Guide on the Education of the Gifted and the Talented
- The First National Conference on Disadvantaged Gifted
- The Identification of the Gifted and Talented